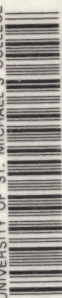


BEDE PAPERS  
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## ERRATA

- Page 43, line 36, *read* "and he that hunts"  
Page 66, line 4, *read* "of misery"  
Page 156, line 14, *read* "It stalks "  
Page 175, line 25, *read* "and sum of the"  
Page 178, line 11, *read* "might it be said"  
Page 235, line 16, *read* "of the Faith"



BEDE PAPERS





# BEDE PAPERS

SHORT ESSAYS

*Read at long intervals before an Association  
of Priests in the Birmingham Diocese  
under the Patronage of the  
Venerable Bede*

By

The Rev. CHARLES E. RYDER

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## Dedication

THESE Essays served their purpose at the various times when they were written to be read in the privacy of an association of priests, and it is only in the hope that those who kindly listened to them when read and personal friends may like to read them that they are now printed. They may be, at best, only "glimpses of the obvious," but still glimpses through the writer's own particular chink in the wall. A string of variegated beads may be attractive, though each bead by itself is of little value. With affectionate reverence the writer ventures to inscribe them to the members, past and present, of the "St Bede's Society," "souls that have toiled and wrought and thought with me."

C. E. RYDER





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*Nihil obstat.*

J. CANONICUS O'HANLON, V.G.,  
*Censor deputatus.*

*Imprimi potest.*

✠ GULIELMUS,  
*Episcopus Arindelensis,*  
*Vicarius Generalis.*

*Westmonasterii,*

*Die 7 Sept., 1907.*

## ERRATA

*Page 62, line 20, read, a meditative Hercules.*

*139, line 1, read, desere*

*192, line 32, read, for this my son.*

*205, line 32, read, is the indifference.*

*220, lines 23-4, read, is not inconsistent with the theory.*

*237, line 27, read, buckets full.*



# BEDE PAPERS

## I—De Resurrectione Carnis quoad Identitatem Substantiæ

Et nunc quæ est expectatio mea? nonne Dominus? et substantia mea apud te est.—Ps. xxxviii, 7.

**M**ARCHANTIUS in his *Hortus Pastorum* lays down this proposition: "The Resurrection of the body, which the natural reason apprehends with difficulty, is easy for God to do." He confirms this by the following quotation from St Augustine: "The earthly matter out of which the flesh of mortals is created cannot refuse to obey God. But into whatever dust or ashes it is dissolved, into whatever gas or air it is diffused, into whatever substance of other bodies or into the elements themselves it is changed, of whatever animals, even of man, it becomes the food, and so is changed into flesh, it is brought back in an instant to that human soul which first animated it." I am not concerned to verify these words as St Augustine's; but they serve to introduce vividly the difficulty of the Resurrection of the body. On the day of the Resurrection there would seem to be many claimants to the same matter. Why should the matter return to the soul that first animated it? How will the deficiencies be supplied to other souls? Have not they an equal right with

the first possessor? Or will God multiply the matter as He did the loaves and fishes? And if so, could the bodies so formed be said to be the identical bodies in which those souls lived? What claim has the soul to the restitution of matter which other souls have animated? Again, would it be all the matter the soul ever animated during life, but that might be enough to make a multitude of bodies? Or would it be only that matter it possessed at the moment of death, but that might be less than required to make a full and complete body?

When first I felt the difficulty, I wrote down what I then thought was an answer as follows: The Church teaches this, that I shall rise with the same body which I have in this life, i.e., with the body which I have had during my whole life, and in which I have done all my acts good and bad. Now when I die, not a particle of that matter of which my body will then be composed will have been mine for more than seven years, and I may have lived ten times seven years. Still, no one would contradict me, every one would understand me when I said, the body I have now is the same in which I was born, the same in which I shall die, the same in which all my acts good and bad will have been committed. What then is here meant by "the same," if not a particle of matter is the same? I mean this, that when the change of matter has been gradual, particle by particle, each fresh particle coming in the place of one that was there before, the same form, or a gradual development of the same form, constantly remaining—which form has been constantly individualized by the same soul—we call it and understand it to be the same body. The body then of a man of seventy

has these things *identical* with the body he was born in, *individuality* and *form*—individuality, because the soul is identically the same; form, because, although apparently different, it is only the same developed. Nothing else is the same—is identical. Yet every one would agree in saying that it was the same body. Apply this to the Resurrection. What will be required in order that it shall be the same body in which I lived my whole life, was born in and died in, and in which I did all my acts? Nothing, certainly, but identity of individuality and identity of form, for these are the only two things that remained unchanged during life. It is of no consequence of what matter it is composed, for suppose a man to die at seventy, if he had lived to seventy-seven he would not have had one particle of the same matter, yet we should all allow that it was the same body, the same in which he was born.

Such was the unsatisfactory explanation with which I tried to content myself. I now see that I must first explain what I mean by *form*. I do not mean what St Thomas meant by form, that which informs the body, viz., the soul. Then do I mean *shape*? Not exactly, but something more comprehensive than shape. Form as I mean it may include many shapes at different times, but those shapes must all be connected with one another inasmuch as they must be gradual developments of one another. The grown tree is a different shape from what it was when a mere shrub, but it has the same form, as I use it. The shape is ever changing, the form remains the same. Thus it is possible to conceive two trees of the same shape; but each must have its own form, which for the time assumes the same shape as its neighbour. I

have then been assuming that the form of the body, which included all the shapes from birth to death, is the only permanent thing in man besides his soul, for the matter and shape have never been stationary, always in perpetual flux. Therefore I concluded that this form is all that will be required at the Resurrection to ensure the body being the same. The matter—the shape—may be different, for they were never the permanent possessions of the body during life, but the form must be the same, for that through life was the body's indisputable possession.

This, as I have said, once satisfied me, but on closer examination I find that what gave the form its permanence through life was the uninterrupted flow of matter into continually succeeding shapes. Had that material continuity been interrupted, the form would have no longer been the same, even though it might possess the same shape. But whatever else death does, it most certainly breaks the material continuity of form; therefore there can be no identity of form in the body at the Resurrection. Thus every footing on which to ground identity seems to have eluded us, matter, shape, form. There is nothing else but to look back again and examine more minutely matter itself. After all the positive assertions of science that in seven years not one particle remains in the body, can there be anything in the body that survives the dissolution of death?

I understand matter to have what are called substance and accidents, which stand the one to the other in the relation of cause and effect. Accidents are everything in matter which comes in contact with the senses, as colour, resistance, taste, extension, nourishment. Substance naturally

produces accidents of some kind, but not necessarily of one particular kind. On the contrary, accidents are never still, are always changing. Whereas I have no reason to suppose that substance ever changes in itself, but produces different accidents according as the conditions or circumstances change in which it is placed.

It is not irreverent to God's almighty power to say that what appears to us not merely incomprehensible but inconceivable and to involve a contradiction is impossible. For it would not be perfection of power but the contrary for God to contradict Himself. Thus God could not create an infinite creature or make a thing to be and not to be at the same time, or make the addition of one and one to be four. Now I will venture to class with these impossibilities that one thing should be made another thing. Almighty God can, of course, create indefinitely whatsoever He wills. He can annihilate whatever He wills. He can divide whatever He has created compound. He can undo His work. He can add to a unit, such as the soul, and having added can subtract what he had added. But could God divide what He has created a unit? It would involve the principle of contradiction. He could annihilate it and simultaneously create a compound or divided being in its place, but He could not divide what He has created indivisible.

Substance, then, I should suppose, God has created a unit that is an unextended, indivisible force. Even chemical investigation has arrived at the conclusion that matter in its ultimate analysis resolves itself into positive and negative force. Two or more of these forces brought together produce extension, and with extension other acci-



dents, as colour, resistance, growth, nourishment. Change in the accidents I should suppose, as I said, not to indicate, properly speaking, change in the units themselves that form the substance, but only change in their circumstances or condition. Thus under one condition the substance would produce the accidents of decay, under others those of dormant life as in the seed, under others those of growth, and under others those of taste and nourishment. In transubstantiation God supernaturally supports the accidents after He has withdrawn the substance into nonentity and puts another substance in its place. To change water into wine need not be transubstantiation, but only, if I may coin the word, transaccidentation, that is, the substance supernaturally made to produce the accidents of wine instead of those of water. Now applying this to the Resurrection of the body, I should say the substance of the body has never changed, but that under ever-changing circumstances it has produced ever-changing accidents, until at last, under the momentous change of the withdrawal of the soul, it has produced the accidents of decay, varying according to the conditions under which this withdrawal of the soul is made. If devoured by wild beasts or cannibals, the substance is never assimilated by other substance, but under these conditions contributes accidents of nourishment to that creature which has devoured it. So with all the food we eat. We never assimilate or are nourished by the substance but by the accidents which under such circumstances the substance produces.

At the resurrection, then, every substance can return to the soul to which it first belonged without injustice to any other body to which it may

have temporally lent its accidents. Accidents, it is true, will be withdrawn with the substance which produced them; but that need cause no loss to any body, the original substance being sufficient to produce all the accidents required. For the same substance may produce more or less accidents according to circumstances, either naturally or supernaturally effected, as would seem to have been the case in the multiplication of the loaves and fishes; for there is no reason to suppose the substance of the loaves and fishes to have been multiplied, for that would have involved creation, but only the multiplication of accidents, such as extension, nourishment, etc. Cardinal Franzelin, if I recollect right, accounts for the capacities of a glorified body, such, for example, as passing through closed doors, passing from place to place in unappreciable time, bilocation, appearing and disappearing, to a supernatural suspension of the accidental effects of substance. The substance is there and would naturally produce extension, form, colour, etc., but they are supernaturally prevented, at least for a time. On the same principle we may suppose that the body of the Archangel Raphael in which he dwelt so long with the young Tobias was no mere phantom, but that the accidents of resistance, extension, colour, form, etc., were really, though supernaturally, produced by the angelic spiritual substance. That which would have been the natural effect of a material substance was supernaturally effected by a spiritual substance. But now I am met by a difficulty which bids fair to invalidate all that has been said. What is the origin of the substance of each new-born body? The soul, we know, is a new creation, but the body we thought was really a part of the

parents' body. Am I prepared to hold that there is a new creation of substance at each conception? Or do the parents part with any of the substance of their own bodies to form that of their child? According to the theory which I have been advocating the parents cannot part with any of the unit forces which compose the original substance of their bodies, but only that substance which is lending them the accidents of nourishment. That substance before being eaten may have been producing the accidents of vegetables or animals, but comes to form the parents' accidental substance, not their essential, inalienable substance. If it was the essential substance that the parents parted with, it would be liable to be recalled at the resurrection to its original possessor. But is it inconceivable that substance should generate substance? On the supposition that substance is composed of real units and that generation is development not creation, it is quite impossible, because the nature of a unit is unchangeableness. We can conceive some of the units being parted with, but that would suppose Adam's body to have contained all the united substance of the whole human race. Substance produces accidents—the result of the conjunction of unit forces, extension, resistance, etc. Circumstances perpetually increase or change these accidents, especially the circumstance of enlisting the accidents of some other substance as food. Now it is this auxiliary substance which cannot be assimilated by the parents' essential substance, that, I suppose, is parted with to form the essential substance of the child. So that the essential substance of each one of us was once the substance of animals and vegetables, as Adam's sub-



stance was once the substance of the dust of the earth.

But still the difficulty pursues us. How, if the accidental substance which the parents sacrifice to form the essential substance of their child, had ever been essential substance of some other human being? I can only presume that the providence of God prevents such a complication as He provides that every plant shall take from the soil only its proper nutriment.

Father Collins in his late work *Heaven Opened* has a chapter entitled "The Body," in which he says: "It is comparatively easy to believe in the resurrection of the body which has seen no corruption, but when the body has been resolved into dust and into divers gases, has fertilized the earth, or been eaten by other men, how then are we to believe that the same body will be restored to each one? This question," he replies, "is not so hard to answer. The body which a man has at his first conception in what is called the primary cell is the very same body he has when his frame is full grown. The quantity more or less of gross matter does not affect the sameness of the body. The identity of the body is to be found in the sameness not of all the gross matter, but of the *vital principle*. And as first, from the primary cell, the vital principle built up the whole frame, so in the resurrection it may easily reorganize its ancient dust, or reconstruct its material frame partly from other dust, the identity of the body requiring a very small quantity of the same essential matter." A little further on Father Collins declares his agreement with those who say that the essential part of the body ever remains unchanged in what are termed its

"cellular tissues." "But the essential part," he adds, "is very small compared with the gross mass of accidental matter. To preserve for each man what is essential for the identity of his body does not require any very great stretch of power." "Ignorance," he concludes, "of the nature of the body, and of the nature of the primary atoms of matter supposes difficulties where they do not exist." This seems—if I understand Father Collins—to coincide as far as it goes with what I have been trying to say, at least it seems to aim at the same issue, but it does not recognize some of the difficulties which I have tried to meet. Besides, there is, to my mind, something very unsatisfactory, and needlessly so in the use of the physiological terms *vital principle* and *cellular tissues*. The first is too vague and the second too gross, unless by *vital principle* is meant the same as *unextended forces* and by *cellular tissues* what I should call *substance* or the conjunction of those forces, producing accidents, or, as he would say, building up the frame.

But the brightest light seems to me to come from the theology of the Holy Eucharist, which gives no mere conjecture but absolute certainty; first, that the substance and accidents are distinct—are not identical, because it would be impossible for God Himself to separate a thing from itself; and second, that we are to reckon extension, resistance and nourishment amongst the accidents of substance. That which in the bread is withdrawn and gives place to the Body of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, that, in my body, is all that I shall need at the Resurrection to ensure perfect identity. It is safe from absorption or assimilation or other destruction because it is

not identical with extension, resistance, nourishment or any accidents.

Father Dalgairns in his book on Holy Communion, in the chapter on *Modern Theories of Matter*, quotes a passage from an article by the great chemist Professor Faraday, which expresses boldly the belief that substance is simply force and what we call matter the accidents produced by those forces. Father Dalgairns says: "He first states the ordinary view of matter to be that it is composed of atoms, that is, of little unchangeable, impenetrable pieces of matter, each with an atmosphere of force grouped around it." The professor continues, "To my mind this nucleus vanishes, and the substance consists of power. And, indeed, what notion can we form of the nucleus independent of its powers? All our perception and knowledge of the atom, and even our fancy, is limited to ideas of its powers; what thought remains on which to hang the imagination of an atom independent of its acknowledged forces? A mind just entering on the subject may consider it difficult to think of the powers of matter independent of a separate something to be called the matter, but it is certainly far more difficult, and indeed impossible, to think of or imagine that matter independent of the powers. Now the powers we know and recognize in every phenomenon of creation, the abstract matter in none. Why then assume the existence of that of which we are ignorant, which we cannot conceive, and for which there is no philosophical necessity?"

This is a valuable testimony of physical science that substance is unextended forces. But of course it fails to recognize what we only know from the theology of the Blessed Sacrament, viz., that sub-

stance and accidents are not identical, that if the substance is the forces, the accidents are not the forces but the effects of those forces, and therefore that we never see the forces themselves, i.e., substance, but we see the effect of those forces, that is accidents.

It is this truth—the distinction between substance and accidents, made certain in the mystery of Transubstantiation—that seems to me to place the identity of the body at the Resurrection quite within reach of our imagination. “And now what is my hope? is it not the Lord? and my substance is with thee.”\*

\* Ps. xxxviii, 8.

## II—Religious Johnsoniana

Praise not a man before he speaketh, for this is the trial of men.—*Ecclus* xxvii, 8.

**I**T seems hard to say of the truth-loving Johnson, that the merit of his conversation is that he is then taken in the act of telling the truth, and yet, in a certain sense, this expresses the peculiar advantage of his conversation over his writing. When he took his pen in hand, he seemed, in the words of Boswell, "to be confined by a chain which early imagination and long habit made him think massy and strong." The weight of the Reformation was upon his shoulders, he got into Protestant form and folded his vigorous thought in cumbrous sonorous Latinisms, till it lost much of its pointedness, and would adapt itself to any phase of Anglican interpretation.

The following extracts from his conversations, as related by Boswell, have been chosen for their reference, directly or indirectly, to religion, especially to the doctrines of the Catholic Church. They have been taken from different parts up and down the four volumes of Boswell's *Life*, and arranged according to their subject-matter, so that in some instances what was said at different times will appear to belong to the same conversation. If this is taking a liberty, I trust it has in no case done violence to the author's meaning. Of course, they do not give a complete picture of Johnson, but, at least, the general impression they have is



pleasant and real. The popular picture of Johnson, such as Macaulay draws in his review of Croker's edition, is very amusing, but too much of a caricature, and it almost ignores the religious side of his character. Nothing fits a sincere man so close as his religion; and certainly in Dr Johnson, when we consider his circumstances of dependence upon Protestant favour for the reputation and sale of his writings, the vigorous independence of his intellect is well shown by the bold way in which he expressed himself on religious matters; while at the same time they show many of his other characteristics of mind, such as his rough good-natured combativeness, his wit, his melancholy, his hot temper, and withal his deep earnestness. Of course, the opinions of Dr Johnson on religious subjects, great and good as he was, according to his light, are of little value to Catholics, except in dealing with Protestants. But even St Paul did not disdain Gentile testimony when speaking to Gentiles.

These conversations are not perfectly consistent one with another, still less with others which might be found. But religious consistency is not expected outside the Catholic Church. The extracts illustrate, nearly in this order, his religious intolerance, hatred of infidelity, and fear of death; his view of Catholic doctrine, of Bible Protestantism, of convents and of ghosts, his sympathy with the Irish grievances and with conversion to the Catholic Church.

He thus refers to the religious impressions of his early life: "Sunday was a heavy day to me, when I was a boy. My mother confined me on that day, and made me read *The Whole Duty of Man*, from a great part of which I could derive no in-

struction. When, for instance, I had read the chapter on Theft, which from my infancy I had been taught was wrong, I was no more convinced that theft was wrong than before; so there was no accession of knowledge. A boy should be instructed in such books, by having his attention directed to the arrangement, to the style, and other excellences of composition; that the mind being thus engaged by an amusing variety of objects may not grow weary. I fell into an inattention to religion, or an indifference about it, in my ninth year. The church at Lichfield, in which we had a seat, wanted reparation, so I was to go and find a seat in other churches, and having bad eyes, and being awkward about this, I used to go and read in the fields on Sunday. This habit continued till my fourteenth year; and still I have a great reluctance to go to church. I then became a sort of lax talker against religion, for I did not much think against it; and this lasted till I went to Oxford, where it would not be suffered. When at Oxford, I took up Law's *Serious Call to a Holy Life*, expecting to find it a dull book (as such books generally are), and perhaps to laugh at it. But I found Law quite an overmatch for me; and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion, after I became capable of rational inquiry."\*

Although Johnson considered opinions as public property, to be tilted at by any knight-errant who felt in the humour to break a lance, he felt that religion was too vitally personal to be so exposed, and if attacked was to be defended in quite a different temper. Mr Murray praised the ancient philosophers for the candour and good humour

\* Vol. 1, p. 23.

with which those of different sects disputed with each other.

*Johnson*: "Sir, they disputed with good humour, because they were not in earnest as to religion. Had the ancients been serious in their belief, we should not have had their gods exhibited in the manner we find them represented in the poets. The people would not have suffered it. They disputed with good humour upon the fanciful theories, because they were not interested in the truth of them. When a man has nothing to lose, he may be in good humour with his opponent. Accordingly you see in Lucian that the Epicurean, who argues only negatively, keeps his temper; the Stoic, who has something positive to preserve, grows angry. Being angry with one who controverts an opinion which you value, is a necessary consequence of the uneasiness which you feel. Every man who attacks my belief diminishes in some degree my confidence in it, and therefore makes me uneasy. Those only who believed in revelation have been angry at having their faith called in question, because they only had something upon which they could rest as matter of fact."\*

*Murray*: "It seems to me that we are not angry at a man for controverting an opinion which we believe and value; we rather pity him."

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, to be sure, when you wish a man to have that belief which you think is of infinite advantage, you wish well to him; but your primary consideration is your own quiet. If a madman were to come into this room with a stick in his hand, no doubt we should pity the state of his mind; but our primary consideration

\* Vol. III, p. 27.



would be to take care of ourselves. We should knock him down first and pity him afterwards. No, sir; every man will dispute with great good humour upon a subject upon which he is not interested. I will dispute very calmly upon the probability of another man's son being hanged; but if a man zealously expresses the probability that my own son will be hanged, I shall certainly not be in a very good humour with him."

*Murray*: "But, sir, truth will always bear an examination."

*Johnson*: "Yes, sir, but it is painful to be forced to defend it. Consider, sir, how should you like, though conscious of your innocence, to be tried before a jury for a capital crime once a week?"

Johnson's enlightened view of religious intolerance naturally follows from these principles. "Sir, you are, to a certain degree, hurt by knowing that even one man does not believe.\* Every society," he said, "has a right to preserve public peace and order, and therefore has a good right to prohibit the propagation of opinions which have a dangerous tendency. To say the magistrate has a right is using an inadequate word; it is the society for which the magistrate is agent. He may be morally or theologically wrong in restraining the propagation of opinions which he thinks dangerous, but he is politically right. Every man has a right to liberty of conscience, and with that the magistrate cannot interfere. People confound liberty of thinking with liberty of talking; nay, with liberty of preaching. Every man has a physical right to think as he pleases; for it cannot be discovered how he thinks. He has not a moral right, for he ought to inform himself, and think

\* Vol. III, p. 256.

justly. But, sir, no member of a society has a right to teach any doctrine contrary to what the society holds to be true. The magistrate, I say, may be wrong in what he thinks; but while he thinks himself right, he may and ought to enforce what he thinks.\* Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be established is by martyrdom. The magistrate has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conscious of the truth has a right to suffer. I am afraid there is no other way of ascertaining the truth but by persecution on the one hand and enduring on the other."

*Goldsmith*: "Our first Reformers who were burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ ——"

*Johnson* (interrupting): "Sir, they were not burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ, but for insulting those who did believe it. And, sir, when the Reformers began, they did not intend to be martyred; as many of them ran away as could."

*Mayo*: "But, sir, is it not very hard that I should not be allowed to teach my children what I really believe to be the truth?"

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, you might contrive to teach your children *extra scandalum*; but, sir, the magistrate, if he knows it, has a right to restrain you. Suppose you teach your children to be thieves?"

*Mayo*: "This is making a joke of the subject."

*Johnson*: "No, sir, take it thus, that you teach the community of goods; for which there are as many plausible arguments as for most erroneous doctrines. You teach them that all things at first were in common, and that no man had a right to

\* Vol. II, p. 153.

anything but as he laid his hand upon it; and that this is, or ought to be, the rule amongst mankind. Here, sir, you sap a great principle in society, property. And don't you think the magistrate would have a right to prevent you? Or, suppose you teach your children the notion of the Adamites, and they should run naked through the streets, would not the magistrate have a right to flog 'em into their doublets? If I think it right to steal Mr Dilly's plate, I am a bad man; but he can say nothing to me. If I make an open declaration that I think so, he will keep me out of his house. If I put forth my hand, I shall be sent to Newgate. This is the graduation of thinking, preaching and acting; if a man thinks erroneously, he may keep his thoughts to himself, and nobody will trouble him; if he preaches erroneous doctrine, society will expel him; if he acts in consequence of it, the law takes place and he is hanged."

*Mayo*: "But, sir, ought not Christians to have liberty of conscience?"

*Johnson*: "I have already told you so, sir, you are coming back to where you were."

*Boswell*: "Dr Mayo is always taking a return postchaise, and going the stage over again. He has it half-price."

*Johnson*: "Dr Mayo, like other champions of unlimited toleration, has got a set of words. Sir, it is no matter, politically, whether the magistrate be right or wrong. Suppose a club were formed to drink confusion to King George III and a happy restoration to Charles III, this would be very bad with respect to the State; but every member of that club must either conform to its rules or be turned out of it. Old Baxter, I re-

member, maintains that the magistrate should tolerate all things that are tolerable. This is no good definition of toleration upon any principle; but it shows that he thought that some things were not tolerable.\* Consider, sir, if you have children whom you wish to educate in the principles of the Church of England, and there comes a Quaker who tries to pervert them to his principles, you would drive away the Quaker. You would not trust to the predomination of right, which you believe is in your opinions; you will keep wrong out of their heads. Now the vulgar are the children of the State. If anyone attempts to teach them doctrines contrary to what the State approves, the magistrate may and ought to restrain him."

*Seward*: "Would you restrain private conversation, sir?"

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, it is difficult to say where private conversation begins and where it ends. If we three should discuss even the great question concerning the existence of a supreme being by ourselves, we should not be restrained; for that would be to put an end to all improvement. But if we should discuss it in the presence of ten boarding-school girls and as many boys, I think the magistrate would do well to put us in the stocks, to finish the debate there.† In short, sir, I have got no further than this: every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the test."

Of course, infidelity found no mercy at the hands of Johnson; it even prejudiced him against the natural abilities of unbelievers. Some one said

\* Vol. IV, p. 153.

† Vol. IV, p. 16.

that the character of an infidel was worse than any other.

*Johnson*: "Sir, I agree with him; for the infidel would be found guilty of any crime if he were inclined to it."\* "To find a substitute for violated morality," he said, "was the leading feature in all perversions of religion."† No honest man could be a Deist, for no man could be so after a fair examination of the proofs of Christianity.‡ Boswell suggested Hume as an honest Deist.

*Johnson*: "No, sir; Hume owned to a clergyman in the bishopric of Durham that he had never read the New Testament with attention."§ Of Voltaire Johnson said: "These are the petty cavils of petty minds." Of Bolingbroke: "I never read Bolingbroke's impiety, and therefore am not interested in its confutation. Sir, he was a scoundrel and a coward; a scoundrel for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward, because he had not the resolution to fire it off himself, but left half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman to draw the trigger after his death."|| Speaking of Rousseau, Boswell asked: "Do you really think him a bad man?" *Johnson*: "Sir, if you are talking jestingly of this, I don't talk with you. If you mean to be serious, I think him one of the worst of men—a rascal who ought to be hunted out of society, as he has been. Three or four nations expelled him, and it is a shame that he is protected in this country."

*Boswell*: "I don't think his intention was bad."

*Johnson*: "Sir, that will not do. We cannot prove any man's intention to be bad. You may

\* Vol. III, p. 33.      † Vol. III, p. 78.      ‡ Vol. II, p. 5.

§ Vol. I, p. 290.      || Vol. I, p. 186.



shoot a man through the head, and say you intended to miss him, but the judge will order you to be hanged. An alleged want of intention, when evil is committed, will not be allowed in a court of justice. Rousseau, sir, is a very bad man. I would sooner sign a sentence for his transportation than that of any felon who has gone from the Old Bailey these many years. Yes, I should like to have him work in the plantations."

*Boswell*: "Sir, do you think him as bad as Voltaire?"

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, it is difficult to settle the proportion of iniquity between them."\*

The breadth of Johnson's mind is shown by his fully recognizing, in spite of his love of logic, the truth which Cardinal Newman lays so much stress upon in his *Grammar of Assent*, that logic is an inadequate instrument of the human understanding, and that some of the most fundamental beliefs of mankind rest on proofs stronger than logic. For instance, discussing the freedom of the will he said: "You are surer that you are free than you are of prescience; you are surer that you can lift your finger or not, as you please, than you are of any conclusion from a deduction from reasoning. But let us consider a little the objection from prescience. It is certain that I am either to go home to-night or not; that does not prevent my freedom. If I am well acquainted with a man, I can judge with great probability how he will act in any case, without his being restrained by my judging. God may have this probability increased to certainty."† Later on he concluded: "All theory is against the freedom of the will; all experience for it." "But, sir, as to the doctrine of necessity, no

\* Vol. II, p. 7.

† Vol. III, p. 196.

man believes it. If a man should give me arguments that I do not see, though I could not answer them, should I believe that I do not see?"\*

"I mentioned to Dr Johnson," says Boswell, "that David Hume's persisting in his infidelity, when he was dying, shocked me much."

*Johnson*: "Why should it shock you, sir? Hume owned he had never read the Testament with attention. Here, then, was a man who had been at no pains to inquire into the truth of religion, and had continually turned his mind the other way. It was not to be expected that the prospect of death would alter his way of thinking, unless God should send an angel to set him right."†

Johnson had a great fear of death. But it was no weak timidity. It was a lively faith in the strictness of God's judgements, without the hope and consolation which the Catholic Church alone can offer through her sacraments.

*Boswell*: "Is not the fear of death natural to man?"

*Johnson*: "So much so that the whole of life is but keeping away the thoughts of it. . . . I know not whether I should wish to have a friend by me, or have it all between God and myself. . . . No rational man can die without uneasy apprehension."‡

*Mrs Knowles*: "The Scripture tells us 'The righteous shall have hope in his death.'"

*Johnson*: "Yes, madam; that is, he shall not have despair. But consider, his hope of salvation must be founded on the terms on which it is promised that the mediation of our Saviour shall be applied to us, namely, obedience; and, where obedience has failed, then, as supplementary to

\* Vol. IV, p. 22.    † Vol. III, p. 102.    ‡ Vol. IV, p. 54.

it, repentance. But what man can say that his obedience has been such as he would approve of in another, or even in himself upon close examination, or that his repentance has not been such as to require being repented of? No man can be sure that his obedience and repentance will obtain salvation."

*Mrs Knowles*: "But Divine intimation of acceptance may be made to the soul."

*Johnson*: "Madam, it may; but I should not think the better of a man who should tell me, on his death-bed, he was sure of salvation. A man cannot be sure himself that he has Divine intimation of acceptance, much less can he make others sure that he has it."

*Boswell*: "Then, sir, we must be content to acknowledge that death is a terrible thing."

*Johnson*: "Yes, sir; I have made no approaches to a state which can look on it as not terrible."

*Mrs Knowles*: "Does not St Paul say, 'I have fought the good fight of faith, I have finished my course; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of life?'"

*Johnson*: "Yes, madam; but here was a man inspired, a man who had been converted by supernatural interposition."

*Boswell*: "In prospect death is dreadful; but in fact we find that people die easy."

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, most people have not thought much of the matter, so cannot say much, and it is supposed they die easy. Few believe it certain that they are then to die, and those who do, set themselves to behave with resolution, as a man does who is going to be hanged."

*Miss Seward*: "There is one mode of the fear of death which is certainly absurd, and that is the



dread of annihilation, which is only a pleasing sleep without a dream."

*Johnson*: "It is neither pleasing nor sleep; it is nothing. Now mere existence is so much better than nothing, that one would rather exist, even in pain, than not exist. . . . The lady confounds annihilation, which is nothing, with the apprehension of it, which is dreadful. It is in the apprehension of it that the horror of annihilation consists."

Boswell said he had reason to believe that the thought of annihilation gave Hume no pain.

*Johnson*: "It was not so, sir; he had a vanity in being thought easy. It is more probable that he should assume an appearance of ease, than so very improbable a thing should be, as a man not afraid of going (as, in spite of his delusive theory, he cannot be sure but he may go) into an unknown state, and not being uneasy at leaving all he knew."\* Boswell said Hume had told him that he felt no uneasiness at the thought of annihilation at death.

*Johnson*: "Sir, if he really thinks so, his perceptions are disturbed; he is mad. If he does not think so, he lies. He may tell you he holds his finger in the flame of a candle without feeling pain; would you believe him? When he dies, he at least gives up all he has."† Johnson said "he never had a moment in which death was not terrible to him." He added that "it had been observed that scarce any man dies in public but with apparent resolution, from that desire of praise which never quits." Boswell said Dr Dodd seemed willing to die, and full of hopes and happiness. "Sir," said Johnson, "Dr Dodd would have given both his hands and

\* Vol. III, p. 102.

† Vol. II, p. 54.

both his legs to have lived. The better a man is the more he is afraid of death, having a clearer view of infinite purity.”\* He owned that our being in an unhappy uncertainty as to our salvation was mysterious, and said, “Ah! we must wait till we are in another state of being to have many things explained to us.” At another time he said, “It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives. The act of dying is not of importance, it lasts so short a time.” He added (with an earnest look), “A man knows it must be so, and submits. It will do him no good to whine.”† “Some people are not afraid, because they look upon salvation as the effect of an absolute decree, and think they feel in themselves the marks of sanctification. Others, and those the most rational in my opinion, look upon salvation as conditional; and, as they never can be sure that they have complied with the conditions, they are afraid.”‡

At another time, when Johnson said that he was oppressed with the fear of death, Dr Adams suggested that God was infinitely good.

*Johnson*: “That He is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of His nature will allow, I certainly believe; but it is necessary for good, upon the whole, that individuals should be punished. As to an individual, therefore, He is not infinitely good; and as I cannot be sure that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted, I am afraid I may become one of those who shall be damned.”

*Dr Adams*: “What do you mean by damned?”

*Johnson* (passionately and loudly): “Sent to Hell, sir, and punished everlastingly.”

*Dr Adams*: “I don’t believe that doctrine.”

\* Vol. III, p. 102.    † Vol. II, p. 63.    ‡ Vol. IV, p. 190.

*Johnson*: "Hold, sir; do you believe that some will be punished at all?"

*Dr Adams*: "Being excluded from Heaven will be a punishment; yet there may be no great positive suffering."

*Johnson*: "Well, sir, but if you admit any degree of punishment, there is an end of your argument, for infinite goodness, simply considered, would inflict no punishment whatever. There is no infinite goodness physically considered; morally there is. . . . A man may have such a degree of hope as to keep him quiet. You see I am not quiet, from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not despair."

*Mrs Adams*: "You seem to forget, sir, the merits of our Redeemer."

*Johnson*: "Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer, but my Redeemer has said, that He will set some on His right hand and some on His left."\*

"He told me," says Boswell, "that he remembered distinctly having had the first notion of Heaven, a place to which good people went, and Hell, a place to which bad people went, communicated to him by his mother, when a little child in bed with her; and that it might be better fixed in his memory, she sent him to repeat it to Thomas Jackson, their man-servant."†

*Boswell*: "One of the most pleasing thoughts is, that we shall see our friends again."

*Johnson*: "Yes, sir, but you must consider, that when we are become purely rational, many of our friendships will be cut off. Many friendships are formed by a community of sensual pleasure; all these will be cut off. We form many friendships

\* Vol. IV, p. 203.

† Vol. I, p. 3.

with bad men, because they have agreeable qualities, and they can be useful to us; but after death, we shall see every one in true light. Then, sir, they talk of our meeting our relations; but then all relationship is dissolved, and we shall have no regard for one person more than another, but for their real value. However, we shall either have the satisfaction of meeting our friends, or be satisfied without meeting them."

*Boswell*: "Yet, sir, we see in Scripture that Dives still retained an anxious concern about his brethren."

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, we must either suppose that passage to be metaphorical, or hold with many divines and all the Purgatorians, that departed souls do not all at once arrive at the utmost perfection of which they are capable."

*Boswell*: "I think, sir, that is a very rational supposition."

*Johnson*: "Why, yes, sir; but we do not know that this is a true one. There is no harm in believing it; but you must not compel others to make it an article of faith; for it is not revealed."

*Boswell*: "Do you think it wrong in a man who holds the doctrine of Purgatory to pray for the souls of his deceased friends?"

*Johnson*: "Why, no, sir."\*

On another occasion Boswell asked: "What do you think, sir, of Purgatory as believed by the Roman Catholics?"

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, it is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment, nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed

\* Vol. II, p. 99.

spirits; and therefore that God is graciously pleased to allow of a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see, sir, there is nothing unreasonable in this."

*Boswell*: "But, then, sir, their Masses for the dead?"

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, if it be once established that there are souls in Purgatory, it is as proper to pray for them as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life."

*Boswell*: "The idolatry of the Mass?"

*Johnson*: "Sir, there is no idolatry in the Mass. They believe God to be there, and they adore Him?"

*Boswell*: "The worship of the saints?"

*Johnson*: "Sir, they do not worship saints; they invoke them: they only ask their prayers. I am talking all this time of the doctrines of the Church of Rome. I grant you that, in practice, Purgatory is made a lucrative imposition, and that the people do become idolatrous as they recommend themselves to the tutelary protection of particular saints. I think their giving the sacrament only in one kind is criminal, because it is contrary to the express institution of Christ, and I wonder how the Council of Trent admitted it."\*

*Boswell*: "Confessions?"

*Johnson*: "Why, I don't know but that is a good thing. The Scripture says, Confess your faults to one another, and the priests confess as well as the laity. Then it must be considered that their absolution is only upon repentance, and often upon penance also. You think your sins may be forgiven without penance upon repentance alone."†

"Of communion under one kind," he said on

\* Vol. II, p. 62.

† Vol. II, p. 60.



another occasion, "they may think that in what is merely ritual, deviations from the primitive mode may be admitted on the ground of convenience; and I think they are as well warranted to make this alteration as we are to substitute sprinkling in the room of the ancient baptism. As to the invocation of saints," he said, "though I do not think it unauthorized, it appears to me that the communion of saints in the Creed means the communion with the saints in heaven as connected with the holy Catholic Church."\*

*Boswell*: "Does not the invocation of saints suppose omnipresence in the saints?"

*Johnson*: "No, sir, it supposes only pluripresence; and when spirits are divested of matter, it seems probable that they should see with more extent than in an embodied state. There is, therefore, no approach to an invasion of any of the divine attributes in the invocation of saints. But I think it will-worship and presumption. I see no command for it, and therefore I think it safer not to practise it."†

*Boswell*: "So, sir, you are no great enemy to the Roman Catholic religion?"

*Johnson*: "No more, sir, than to the Presbyterian religion."

*Boswell*: "You are joking?"

*Johnson*: "No, sir, I really think so. Nay, sir, of the two I prefer the Popish."

*Boswell*: "How so, sir?"

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, the Presbyterians have no church, no apostolic ordination."

*Boswell*: "And do you think that absolutely essential, sir?"

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, as it was an Apostolical

\* Vol. IV, p. 198.

† Vol. II, p. 157.

institution, I think it is dangerous to be without it. And, sir, the Presbyterians have no public worship, they have no form of prayer in which they know they are to join. They go to hear a man pray, and are to judge whether they will join with him."

*Boswell*: "But, sir, their doctrine is the same with that of the Church of England. Their Confession of Faith and the Thirty-nine Articles contain the same points, even the doctrine of predestination."

*Johnson*: "Why, yes, sir; predestination was a part of the clamour of the times, so it is mentioned in our Articles, but with as little positiveness as could be."

*Boswell*: "Is it necessary, sir, to believe all the Thirty-nine Articles?"

*Johnson*: "Why, sir, that is a question which has been much agitated. Some have thought it necessary that they should be all believed, others have considered them to be only articles of peace; that is to say, you are not to preach against them. Sir, they talk of making boys at the University subscribe to what they do not understand; but they ought to consider that our Universities were founded to bring up members for the Church of England, and we must not supply our enemies with arms from our arsenal. No, sir, the meaning of subscribing is, not that they fully understand all the Articles, but that they will adhere to the Church of England. Now take it in this way, and suppose that they should only subscribe their adherence to the Church of England, there would be still the same difficulty; for still the young men would be subscribing to what they did not understand. For if you should ask them, What do you

mean by the Church of England? Do you know in what it differs from the Presbyterian Church, from the Romish Church, from the Greek Church, from the Coptic Church? they could not tell you. So, sir, it comes to the same thing."

Boswell suggested the subscription to the Bible.

*Johnson*: "Why, no, sir. For all sects will subscribe the Bible. Nay, the Mahommetans will subscribe the Bible. For the Mahommetans acknowledge Jesus Christ, as well as Moses, but maintain that God sent Mahommet as a still greater prophet than either."\*

Johnson evidently felt the necessity of a law-giving and conscience-binding Church, and saw that the Bible and the Thirty-nine Articles could not be made to take the place of a definite creed. At the same time he defended the English establishment, because he belonged to it, just as he would have defended, if necessary, the person of his Hanoverian sovereign, although he felt the higher claims of the Stuarts. Johnson said: "Our religion is in a book. We have an order of men whose duty it is to teach it; and this is in general pretty well observed. Yet ask the first ten gross men you meet, and hear what they can tell of their religion."

Boswell says: "I mentioned an acquaintance of mine, a sectary, who was a very religious man, who not only attended regularly on public worship with those of his communion, but made a particular study of the Scriptures, and even wrote a commentary on some parts of them, yet was known to be very licentious, etc. . . . maintaining that men are to be saved by faith alone, and that the Christian religion had not prescribed any

\* Vol. II, p. 93.



fixed rule for the intercourse between the sexes."

*Johnson*: "Sir, there is no trusting to that crazy piety."

Though Johnson had not the Catholic feeling about monks and nuns, his appreciation of them would put to shame many in a more enlightened age. "If convents," he said, "should be allowed at all, they should only be retreats for persons unable to serve the public, or who have served it. It is our first duty to serve society; and after we have done that, we may attend wholly to the salvation of our own souls. A youthful passion for abstracted devotion should not be encouraged."\* After returning from his tour in France, he remarked: "And, sir, I was kindly treated by the English Benedictines, and had a cell appropriated to me in their convent."† He did not, however, understand the merit of the entire sacrifice of the will to God involved in solemn vows. "It is as unreasonable," he said, "for a man to go into a Carthusian convent for fear of being immoral, as for a man to cut off his hands for fear he should steal. There is indeed great resolution in the immediate act of dismembering himself; but when that is once done, he has no longer any merit; for though it is out of his power to steal, yet he may all his life be a thief in his heart. So when a man has once become a Carthusian, he is obliged to continue so, whether he chooses it or not. Their silence, too, is absurd. We read in the Gospel of the Apostles being sent to preach, but not to hold their tongues. All severity that does not tend to increase good or prevent evil, is idle. I said to the Lady Abbess of a convent, 'Madam,

\* Vol. II, p. 6.      † Vol. II, p. 272.

you are here, not for the love of virtue, but the fear of vice.' She said she should remember this as long as she lived."\*

Boswell said to him one day: "But you would not have me bind myself by a solemn obligation?"

*Johnson*: "What! a vow? Oh, no, sir, a vow is a horrible thing. It is a snare for sin. The man who cannot go to heaven without a vow, may go——."†

His own acts show that he did not ignore the benefit of mortification, or even its expiatory power. "Once, indeed," said Johnson, "I was disobedient; I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault; I went to Uttoxeter in very bad weather, and stood for a considerable time bare-headed in the rain, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory."‡

"Sir, I have no objection to a man's drinking wine, if he can do it in moderation. I found myself apt to go to excess in it, and therefore, after having been for some time without it, on account of illness, I thought it better not to return to it. Every man is to judge for himself, according to the effects which he experiences. One of the Fathers tells us he found fasting made him so peevish that he did not practise it."

His judgements about the appearance of ghosts show how rational his mind was, without being materialistic. "I am sorry," he said, "that John Wesley did not take more pains to inquire into the evidence for it."§

\* Vol. II, p. 272.

† Vol. III, p. 241.

‡ Vol. IV, p. 253.

§ Vol. III, p. 177.

*Miss Seward*: "What, sir, about a ghost?"

*Johnson*: "Yes, madam; this is a question which, after five thousand years, is yet undecided; a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding."\* "It is wonderful that five thousand years have now elapsed since the creation of the world, and still it is undecided whether or not there has ever been an instance of the spirit of any person appearing after death. All good argument is against it, but all belief is for it." "A total disbelief in them is adverse to the opinion of the existence of the soul between death and the last day; the question simply is, whether departed spirits ever have the power of making themselves perceptible to us. A man who thinks he has an apparition, can only be convinced himself; his authority will not convince another; his conviction, if rational, must be founded on being told something which cannot be known but by supernatural means."† Johnson said that one day at Oxford, as he was turning the key of his chamber, he heard his mother distinctly call "Sam." She was then at Lichfield. He admitted the influence of evil spirits upon our minds, and said: "Nobody who believes the New Testament can deny it."‡ The following prayer of Johnson after his wife's death, is very illustrative of his religious feeling about spirits: "O Lord, Governor of heaven and earth, in whose hands are embodied departed spirits, if Thou hast ordained the souls of the dead to minister to the living, and appointed my departed wife to have care of me, grant that I may enjoy the good effects of her attentive ministration, whether exercised by appearance, impulses,

\* Vol. III, p. 155.

† Vol. IV, p. 70.

‡ Vol. IV, p. 198.

dreams or in any other manner agreeable to Thy government. Forgive my presumption, enlighten my ignorance, and however meaner agents are employed, grant me the blessed influences of Thy Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”\*

One of the most refreshing characteristics of this typical Englishman was his hearty sympathy with Catholic Ireland. “The Irish,” he said, “are in a most unnatural state, for we see there the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance even in the ten persecutions of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics. Did we tell them we have conquered them, it would be above-board; to punish them by confiscation and other penalties, as rebels, was monstrous injustice. King William was not their lawful sovereign: he had not been acknowledged by the Parliament of Ireland when they appeared in arms against him.”† To Sir Thomas Robinson, who said he feared that the Corn Laws proposed for Ireland would be prejudicial to English corn trade: “Sir Thomas, you talk the language of a savage. What, sir, would you prevent any people from feeding themselves, if by any honest means they can do it?” To an Irish gentleman he said: “Do not make a union with us, sir; we shall unite with you only to rob you.”‡ To a gentleman who hinted that the debilitating policy of the British Government might be necessary to support the authority of the English Government, he replied by saying: “Let the authority of the English Government perish, rather than be maintained by iniquity. Better would it be to restrain the turbulence of the natives by the authority of the sword, and to make them

\* Vol. I, p. 129.

† Vol. II, p. 156.

‡ Vol. III, p. 274.

amenable to law and justice by an effectual and vigorous police, than to grind them to powder by all manner of disabilities and incapacities. Better," said he, "to hang or drown people at once, than by an unrelenting persecution to beggar and starve them."\*

Johnson was too honest to pretend to confound the Catholic Church with the herd of sects around her. Nor was he so lenient towards converts to any other religion as to Catholic converts. Of a young lady who became a Quaker he said: "She could not have any proper conviction that it was her duty to change her religion, which is the most important of all subjects, and should be studied with all care and with all the helps we can get. She knew no more of the Church which she left and that which she joined than she did of the difference between the Copernican and Ptolemaic systems."

*Mrs Knowles*: "She had the New Testament before her."

*Johnson*: "Madam, she could not understand the New Testament, the most difficult book in the world, for which the study of a life is required."

*Mrs Knowles*: "It is clear as to essentials."

*Johnson*: "But not as to controversial points. The heathens were easily converted, because they had nothing to give up. But we ought not, without very strong conviction indeed, to desert the religion in which we have been educated. That is the religion given to you, the religion in which it may be said Providence has placed you. If you live conscientiously in that religion, you may be safe. But error is dangerous indeed, if you err when you choose a religion for yourself."

\* Vol. II, p. 73.



*Mrs Knowles*: "Must we, then, go by implicit faith?"

*Johnson*: "Why, Madam, the greatest part of our knowledge is implicit faith; and as to religion, have we heard all that a disciple of Confucius, all that a Mahometan can say for himself?"

Mrs Hennicot spoke of her brother, the Rev. Mr Chamberlayne, who had given up great prospects in the Church of England on his conversion to the Roman Catholic Faith.

Johnson exclaimed fervently, "God bless him."\* "A man," he said, "who is converted from Protestantism to Popery may be sincere; he parts with nothing: he is only superadding to what he already had. But a convert from Popery to Protestantism gives up so much of what he has held as sacred as anything that he retains; there is so much laceration of mind in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere and lasting." It is not surprising that Johnson did not realize what was involved in becoming a thorough Catholic. "If you join the Papists," he said, "externally, they will not interrogate you strictly as to your belief in their tenets. No reasoning Papist believes every article of their faith. There is one side on which a good man might be persuaded to embrace it. A good man of a timorous disposition, in great doubt of his acceptance with God, and pretty credulous may be glad to be of a Church where there are so many helps to get to heaven. I would be a Papist if I could. I have fear enough, but an obstinate rationality prevents me. I shall never be a Papist, unless on the near approach of death, of which I, have a great terror. I wonder that women are not all Papists."

\* Vol. iv, p. 197.



*Boswell*: "They are not more afraid of death than men are."

*Johnson*: "Because they are less wicked."

*Dr Adams*: "They are more pious."

*Johnson*: "No, hang 'em, they are not more pious. A wicked fellow is the most pious when he takes to it. He'll beat you all at piety."

Like most religious Protestants he had a great admiration for *The Imitation*. "Thomas à Kempis," he observed, "must be a good book, as the world has opened its arms to receive it. It is said to have been printed, in one language or other, as many times as there have been months since it first came out. I always was struck with this sentence in it: 'Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be.'"

The account of Johnson's last moments will make an appropriate conclusion to his religious conversations. And it is satisfactory to see how peacefully he met the enemy he had so feared during life. Johnson asked Dr Brocklesby to tell him plainly whether he could recover. "Give me a direct answer." The doctor, having first asked him if he could bear the whole truth which way soever it might lead, and being answered that he could, declared that in his opinion he could not recover without a miracle. "Then," said Johnson, "I will take no more physics, not even opiates; for I have prayed that I may render up my soul to God unclouded." In this resolution he persevered, and at the same time used only the weakest kind of sustenance. Being pressed by Mr Windham to take somewhat more generous nourishment, lest too low a diet should have the very effect which he dreaded, by debilitating his mind,

he said: "I will take anything but inebriating sustenance." From the time that he was certain that his death was near, he appeared to be perfectly resigned, was seldom or never fretful or out of temper, and often said to his faithful servant, "Attend, Francis, to the salvation of your soul, which is the object of greatest importance." He also explained to him passages in the Scripture, and seemed to have pleasure in talking upon religious subjects. On Monday, December 13, 1784, the day on which he died, a Miss Morris, daughter of a particular friend of his, called, and said to Francis that she begged to be permitted to see the Doctor, that she might earnestly request him to give her his blessing. Francis went into his room, followed by the young lady, and delivered the message. The Doctor turned himself in his bed, and said, "God bless you, my dear." These were the last words he spoke. His difficulty of breathing increased till about seven o'clock in the evening, when Mrs Barber and Mrs Demoulins, who were sitting in the room, observed that the noise he made in breathing had ceased, went to the bed and found that he was dead.

It must be admitted that the life and death of Dr Johnson form a striking example of how much real religion may exist in one who has not the true faith, and of the impossibility of enjoying the light and peace of the Catholic Church outside her pale. One hesitates whether most to pity the earnest voice "crying in the night—crying for the light," or to despise the maternal incapacity of the English establishment that was unable to minister consolation to one so religious, in the doubts and anxieties of life, or even in the dark hour of his death.

### III—What Kind of Evil is Cruelty to Brute Animals?

**T**ENDERNESS for brute feeling has become one of the characteristics of this country. We live in the midst of an active association for the prevention of cruelty to animals, which is supported by strict imperial legislation. Ill-treatment of animals is spoken of in the newspapers with even more abhorrence, and is sometimes punished in the law-courts with severer penalties, than cruelty to wife and children.

Is it possible that Protestant England should be forming a morality in advance of that of Christianity? Or, if it claims to be a development of Christian morality, what has kept it latent for eighteen centuries?

Has the genial warmth of Protestantism fostered its growth? Is it a healthy development, or a parasitic growth decorating with a delusive beauty the decaying trunk of English Christianity?

Protestantism may perhaps justly claim to have stimulated the commercial welfare of the people by confining as much as possible all their aspirations to earthly prosperity, but it has failed to persuade impartial critics that its substitutes for the old Catholic charities are a more perfect love of one's neighbour. Is it likely, then, that this modern movement of sympathy with the brute creation is a real development of Christianity?

Perhaps it is the fruit of that philosophy which claims to have established a blood relationship

between the brute and man. If so, it certainly has the merit of consistency, but would have to resign all claim to connexion with Christianity, as that philosophy issues in the belief that both man and brute are merely developments of matter. "Man, when he was in honour, did not understand; he is compared to the senseless brutes and is made like unto them."

On the other hand, if Christianity has been less careful of the feelings of the brute creation, it has, at least, always held them to be amongst the most beneficent and wonderful gifts of God to man, and has not discouraged the idea that there may be a life everlasting in store for them. Saints have often been remarkable for their gentleness to brute animals, and Holy Scripture says in so many words, "The just regardeth the lives of his beast, but the bowels of the wicked are cruel."

While, then, it is natural to expect that a Society that has practically given up belief in sin should adopt the idea that physical pain is the one paramount evil—that a Society which has cut its moorings to the Catholic Church should hold distorted views of morality, it cannot be denied that there is such an evil as cruelty, and cruelty to brute animals. The one question is, What kind of evil is this cruelty, judged in the light of true Christian morality?

When man is the victim, the evil readily classes itself as some infringement of charity to our neighbour; it is when a brute is the victim that the difficulty of stating the precise kind of guilt comes to the surface, because we have no law of charity to them.

To define cruelty as the infliction of unnecessary pain is unsatisfactory, because it leaves the endless

question open as to what, under the particular circumstances and in the particular case, may be called necessary. Besides, it does not touch the large class of cruelties, when the cruel person is only a passive spectator, or when the pain is certainly necessary. It seems more exact to say that it is to take deliberate pleasure in the infliction of pain as such; for, of course, a butcher may take an honest pleasure in his work, but not in the simple infliction of pain—to that he is totally indifferent, because he is certain that it is necessary.

What kind of wrong, then, is this taking deliberate pleasure in the infliction of pain as such?

As it is easier to ask questions than to answer them, let us first ask the opinion of a gentle poet, remarkable for his love of brute animals. Cowper, in *The Winter Walk at Noon*, has the following lines:

I would not enter on my list of friends,  
Though graced with polished manners and fine sense  
Yet wanting sensibility, the man  
Who *needlessly* sets his foot upon a worm.  
An inadvertent step may crush the snail  
That crawls at evening in the public path,  
But he *that has humanity*, forewarned,  
Will tread aside and let the reptile live.  
The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,  
And charged, perhaps, with venom, that intrudes  
A visitor unwelcome into scenes  
Sacred to neatness and repose, the alcove,  
The chamber or refectory, may die:  
A necessary act incurs no blame.  
Not so when, held within their proper bounds  
And *guiltless of offence*, they range the air  
Or take their pastime in the spacious field;  
There they are *privileged*; but he that hunts  
Or harms them there is *guilty of a wrong*,  
Disturbs the economy of Nature's realm  
Who, when she formed, designed them an abode.  
The sum is this: If man's convenience, health  
Or safety interfere, his rights and claims



Are paramount, and *must extinguish theirs*;  
Else they are all—the meanest things that are—  
As free to live, and to enjoy that life,  
As God was free to form them at the first,  
Who in His sovereign wisdom made them all.  
Ye, therefore, who love mercy, teach your sons  
To love it too. The springtime of our years  
Is soon dishonoured and defiled in most  
By budding ills that ask a prudent hand  
To check them. But, alas! none sooner shoots,  
If unrestrained, into luxuriant growth  
Than Cruelty, *most devilish of them all*.  
Mercy to him that shows it—is the sole  
And righteous limitation of its act,  
By which Heaven moves in pardoning guilty man,  
And he that shows none, being ripe in years  
And conscious of the outrage he commits,  
*Shall seek it and not find it in his turn.*

Although we may fully agree with Cowper in his tender sympathy with the brute creation, and in his hatred of cruelty to them, it must be admitted that the principles are very indefinite. He may be right to decline the friendship of a man who is wanting in sensibility. But how can he expect all the world to adopt his own particular standard of sensibility? He says that if he were to tread upon a worm merely because it was more pleasant to walk straight than to move aside, his conscience would reproach him. He must be true to his conscience, but some day he himself may be accused of insensibility because he says that he would kill “the creeping vermin that intrudes.” A most refined old gentleman, when living in Italy, is said to have been so tender-hearted that if he found a scorpion in his room, rather than kill it he would wrap it up in paper and throw it out of the window, utterly regardless of its future career. With such tender sensibility as that, he would regard Cowper as a monster of cruelty, and serve him with a summons for putting to death the dappled viper



or jewelled toad merely because they were enjoying the cool shelter of his alcove.

Cowper rests argument on such indefinite words as *needlessly*, *unnecessary*. But that which one person thinks needless, another with equal right judges necessary. "A necessary act," he says, "incurs no blame." But what is a necessary act?

He who hunts the creatures in the "spacious field," he says, "is guilty of a wrong"; and yet he concludes, "The sum is this: if a man's convenience, health or safety interfere, his rights are paramount." But the huntsman says that his health and convenience do interfere, and so under the circumstances he decides to hunt, although Cowper says that in doing so he is guilty of a wrong, and disturbs the economy of nature. "If," he says, "they keep their proper bounds, they are guiltless of offence." But the only guilt in a brute animal is its offensiveness to man, that is, their degree of guiltiness depends entirely upon the sensibility of the person offended. The loathsome and venomous vermin that he pictures creeping in his alcove is, strictly speaking, guiltless of offence, but unquestionably insufferably offensive. He admits that man's convenience and health must "extinguish their rights and claims." And, yet, at last this ill-defined cruelty becomes the worst of sins, "cruelty most devilish of them all," and the brute animal is invested with the privilege of Christian fraternity by being brought under the protection of the Christian law of charity: "Unless you forgive one another, My Father will not forgive you." "Mercy to him that shows it," says Cowper, "is the rule, and he that shows none shall ask it and not find it in his turn."

In all this we look in vain for a sound moral

principle to guide us in the practical enforcement of the laws protecting animals. The laws seem really to protect, not so much the animal, as the sensibility of the public. You may condemn your horse to instant death without being called upon by law to show just cause. But if his sides are galled, you must not put him in the shafts, though it may be your only means of gaining independent livelihood. You may wring the necks of your hens, but you must not carry them to the poultry show by the legs. You may smother moths and butterflies in sulphur for scientific recreation, and shoot down, by the hundred, pheasants that are as tame as domestic fowl, but you will be penally cruel to let an old donkey die in harness. You may train a hawk to strike the heron and the greyhound to catch the hare, but to let your dog worry a cat or pit one cock against another is illegal. There is no cruelty in the furious beating inflicted on the sensitive race-horse during the last quarter of a mile of the race, while the old man dragging his donkey with a load of coal up the hill is so shamefully cruel, that he must choose between a five-shilling fine or an equivalent term of imprisonment.

Without pleading any particular cause, is it not fair to ask for some definite moral principle by which to guide the conscience in dealing with animals?

Perhaps it may be said that these inconsistencies only show that the law cannot be perfectly enforced. But is it so? Is it merely the imperfect application of a well-defined principle that results in these practical inconsistencies? Or is it not rather that there is no definite principle at work, but only the varying sensitiveness of refined classes and still more of individual witnesses? If the witness is a vivisectionist doctor, escape is

certain, but if a poet, like Cowper, the chance is small; but who could escape the sensitive eye of the amiable protector of scorpions?

Nearly thirty years ago Cardinal Newman gave the following as an illustration of "assumption of principle."

"I believe," says the Cardinal, "that some time ago various benevolent persons exerted themselves in favour of the brute creation, who endure so much wanton suffering at the hands of barbarous owners. Various speculations were set afloat in consequence, and various measures advocated. I think I have heard that one doctrine was to the effect that it was wrong to eat veal, lamb and other young meat, inasmuch as you killed creatures which would have enjoyed a longer life, and answered the purpose of food better if you let them live to be beef and mutton. Again shrimp sauce, it was said, ought to give way to lobster; for in the latter case you took one life away, and in the other a hundred. Now the world laughed at all this, and would not condescend to reason: perhaps could not, though it had the best of the question; that is, perhaps, it had not put its ideas sufficiently in order to be able to reason. However, it had reasons, and these reasons will be found traceable up to this first principle, which expresses the general theory of mankind in their conduct towards the inferior animals, viz., that the Creator has placed them absolutely in our hands, that we have no duties to them, and that there is as little sin, except accidentally, and in the particular case, in taking away a brute's life, as in plucking a flower or eating an orange. This being taken for granted, all questions are in their substance solved, and only accidental difficulties remain."

Supposing Cardinal Newman to be correct in his view, the turning point, indeed the only point to be inquired into by the law should be, was there or was there not any *rationabilis causa* for the treatment of the particular brute animal?—whereas, as things go now, the turning point is the feeling of the animal and the feeling of the public.

That the effect of cruelty upon the mind is most demoralizing, fully meriting Cowper's strong epithet "most devilish," is strikingly illustrated in a very graphic scene described by St Augustine in his *Confessions*. \* Speaking of his friend Alypius, he says: "He, not forsaking that secular course which his parents had charmed him to pursue, had gone before me to Rome to study law, and there was carried away incredibly with an incredible eagerness after the shows of gladiators. For, being utterly averse to and detesting such spectacles, he was one day, by chance, met by divers of his acquaintance and fellow-students coming from dinner, and they with a familiar violence haled him, vehemently refusing and resisting, into the amphitheatre during these cruel and deadly shows, he thus protesting: 'Though you hale my body to that place, and there set me, can you also force me to turn my mind or my eyes to those shows? I shall then be absent while present, and so shall overcome both you and them.' They, hearing this, led him on nevertheless, desirous perchance to try that very thing, whether he could do as he said. When they were come thither, and had taken their places as they could, the whole place kindled with that savage pastime. But he closing the passages of his eyes, forbade his eyes to range abroad after such evils. And

\* Book viii.

would he had stopped his ears also! For, in the fight, when one fell, a mighty cry of the whole people striking him strongly, overcome by curiosity, and as if prepared to despise and be superior to it, whatsoever it were, even when seen, he opened his eyes, and was stricken by a deeper wound in his soul, than the other, whom he desired to behold, was in his body; and he fell more miserably than he, upon whose fall that mighty noise was raised which entered through his ears, and unlocked his eyes, to make way for the striking and beating down of a soul, bold rather than resolute, and the weaker, in that it had presumed on itself and ought to have relied on Thee. . . For as soon as he saw blood, he therewith drank down savageness, nor turned away but fixed his eyes drinking in frenzy unawares, and was delighted with that guilty fight and intoxicated with the blood-pastime. Nor was he now the man he came, but one of the throng he came unto, yea, a true associate of theirs that brought him thither. Why say more? He beheld, shouted, kindled and carried hence with him the madness which should goad him to return not only with them who first drew him thither, but also before them, yea, to draw in others. Yet thence didst Thou with a most strong and most merciful hand pluck him and teach him to have confidence not in himself but in Thee. But this was after."

In this extract from St Augustine the victims are human, and therefore, of course, the cruelty is sin; but when the victims are brute animals, however much we may reprobate cruelty to them as a most dangerous symptom, and encourage kindness and gentleness to them, we cannot stigmatize the one as an infringement of Christian justice or charity



any more than we can accept the other as an exemplary fulfilment of brotherly love.

Dr Ullathorne in his *Endowments of Man* tells us that the sovereignty of man over the lower creation is part of the secondary image of God in the soul. If so, cruelty to the brutes would certainly deface that secondary image, and, though not itself sin would be a clear indication that either the primary image had been already defaced or was in imminent danger of being so defaced by actual sin.

It is submitted, then, that cruelty is deliberate delectation in the mere infliction of pain, as such, whether by ourselves or by others; which cruelty may be even a grievous sin, when the pain enjoyed is that of a fellow-creature; but when that of a brute animal, however revolting to the feelings of others, is only an acute symptom of evil disposition, varying according to the degree of delectation in the pain.

Every vice becomes cruel—avarice, anger, lust; but cruelty is not the vice but a quality of the vice. A most aggravating circumstance when a human being is the victim, and therefore sinful; but only a symptom or evidence of evil disposition, when a brute is the victim, because we are not commanded to love all creatures but only one another as ourselves.



## IV—Ruskin and Raphael\*

THE atmosphere of the Renaissance is as inseparable from the artistic works of Raphael and his school as the anti-Catholic prejudice of Elizabethan tradition is from the literary works of Mr Ruskin. But it is as unfair to ignore the artistic and religious merits of Raphael's pictures, on account of the sensuous element in them, as it would be not to acknowledge the good sense, appreciation of artistic beauty, keen discrimination and poetic eloquence of Mr Ruskin's writings, on account of the many unjust things he has said against the Catholic Church.

It is our purpose to draw attention to a flagrant instance of this kind of injustice on the part of Ruskin to Raphael in his first edition of *Modern Painters*.\*

What critic of *Paradise Lost* would be patiently heard, who should make it his one business to hold up to censure the fact that although the subject is historic, most of the detail has no foundation in reality, who should dwell exclusively upon the poet's sensuous tone in his descriptions of Eve, or upon the taint of Arianism in his poem? Such a one would be either quite unfit to criticize a poem or must be the victim of an overpowering prejudice against the poet.

The faults of great men need not be overlooked, but, when they occur in works of stupendous ar-

\* *Modern Painters*, first Edition, vol. III, "The False Religious Ideal," pp. 51-56.

tistic genius, they cannot be pointed out with too much tender palliation and modest diffidence of tone. This is the temper we should expect in a really great critic dealing with a really great artist. But the fact is, Mr Ruskin was the victim of an overmastering prejudice, and this prejudice meets with a stupendous difficulty to be explained away. With his intense passion for art, he writhed under the obtrusive and incontestable sterility of Protestantism in religious art. This barrenness with which Protestantism smote the nations who submitted to her was painfully manifest to his artistic eyes, and required explanation.

How could such an artistic blight be coincident with such a religious verdure as the Reformation? It was enough to try any temper. But temper lost by a critic is fatal. He must account for this hateful blot on the history of the Church of his Baptism. With desperate courage he marshals all his wealth of words to show that the fault does not lie with Protestantism but with the Catholic Church in having welcomed the Renaissance and encouraged Raphael and his school to debase religious art by unhistoric and sensuous treatment.

The first Christians may have been timid of high art which had been so fully dedicated to idolatrous uses; but only one young enough to take everything for what it professes to be could credit the first Reformers with such a faithful imitation of the first Christians. May we say of a delusion what Lord Tennyson says of a lie—

That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with  
outright,

But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.

Mr Ruskin's thesis is that Raphael and his school used religion for the display of art instead

of using art for the display of religion and so acted on a false religious ideal:

“When accurate shade and subtle colour and perfect anatomy and complicated perspective became necessary to the work, the artist’s whole energy was employed in learning the laws of them. His life was devoted, not to the objects of art, but to the cunning of it; and the sciences of composition and light and shade were pursued as if there were abstract good in them, as if, like astronomy or mathematics, they were ends in themselves, irrespective of anything to be affected by them, and without perception on the part of anyone of the abyss to which all were hastening, a fatal change of aim took place throughout the whole world of art. In early times art was employed for the display of religious facts; now religious facts were employed for the display of art. The transition, though imperceptible, was consummate; it involved the entire destiny of painting. It was passing from the paths of life to the paths of death.”

The change took place, he tells us, under the disguise of truth:

“And this change was all the more fatal because at first veiled by an appearance of greater dignity and sincerity than were possessed by the old art.”

The deceitful truth was realistic reform—a closer imitation of nature:

“The appearances of nature were more closely followed in everything.”

This, he allows, was a move in the right direction, but was vitiated by an unworthy intention:

“Was not this, then, a healthy change? No, it would have been healthy, if it had been effected

with a pure motive, and the new truths would have been precious, if they had been sought for truth's sake. But they were not sought for truth's sake but for pride's; and truth which is sought for display may be just as harmful as truth which is spoken in malice."

That this reform sprang from no real love of truth, but only from vanity, he would prove by attesting the utter want of religious feeling in their pictures, and that they only succeeded in creating a number of cold, formal types of religious propriety:

"They were, in the strictest sense of the word, compositions, cold arrangements of propriety and agreeableness according to academical formulas."

He then very realistically describes his own idea of our Lord's Charge to St Peter. After which he disparagingly compares Raphael's picture of the same with his own imaginary one. Having thus dishonoured one of Raphael's pictures, he hastily extends the shadow over other prominent masterpieces and concludes by ascribing all this perversion of talent to the evil genius of the age, the luxurious and impious Vatican.

As Mr Ruskin has been so unsparing in his censures of such a great artist as Raphael, no apology need be made for venturing to differ from such a great art-critic as Mr Ruskin. Indeed, there is room to hope that the illustrious author of *Modern Painters* has lived at least to modify his views on this subject, as he has refrained from re-editing the third volume in his late edition. Nevertheless, since his first impression is still before the public and continues to carry away by its eloquence the approval of many, it is not unfair to state what can be said on the other side.

Mr Ruskin misses in the works of Raphael and his school the supernatural light that shone around the works of Giotto, Perugino and Fra Angelico. It does not follow that Raphael's art was not a natural and healthy development of the earlier art. The full-blown rose, though at the very perfection of its bloom, has lost the peculiar shy suggestive beauty of the bud. It is none the less a development and perfection of the bud, because it has lost its infantine simplicity and is one step nearer to decay. The little fair-haired server in the sanctuary may by a perfectly healthy development mature into the staid, matter-of-fact father of the family. He is not to blame for losing his fair hair and innocent childish ways; nor would he be an abomination of desolation even if again found serving in the holy place. We should look in vain in the poems of Tennyson for the saintly inspirations of Crashaw or Southwell, but the laureate may still be a worthy descendant of his poetical ancestry, and by no means "a monster of hypocrisy who has passed from the paths of life to the paths of death."

Art in the hands of Raphael was no longer the angelic handmaid of religion producing in the features of Madonnas, saints and angels something of the high mysticism of the writings of St John the Evangelist, but it produced a very great army of artists proclaiming religious truth in the face of heresy and enshrining it in immortal works of art. But although art was no longer the celestial server of early days, and carried religious subjects into the halls of palaces, it did not desert the sanctuary; for how many churches there are which boast of an altarpiece by Raphael or his school!

The first illustration which Mr Ruskin gives of



the evil change is Raphael's Madonna of the Chair, which he contrasts antagonistically with the Crowned Queen Virgin of Perugino:

"The Crowned Queen Virgin of Perugino sank into a simple Italian mother in Raphael's Madonna of the Chair."

This seems hardly fair, for one is the court of Heaven, the other is the house at Nazareth. The mystery of the Incarnation demands both. One is the Divinity, the other the Humanity. It was inevitable that, as art became more and more of a profession, and works of art were multiplied by thousands, that it should choose the natural—the human side of the Incarnation rather than the mystic and divine, as it were the Gospel of St Matthew or Luke rather than the Gospel of St John. Since nature is the preceptor of art, artists found, not higher, but more ready, and quite as true inspiration in such words as, "She brought forth her first-born Son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn," rather than in such sublime passages as, "The Word was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us; and we saw His glory, as it were of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." But the mind of even a very religious Protestant sometimes shrinks from homely realizations of the mystery of the Incarnation. It can tolerate such a mystery if kept strictly within the limits of a world of its own, but that it should be intruded into everyday life, that Jesus and Mary should be perpetuated as the simple Jewish maiden and her Infant, is to such minds unpardonable; just as they might enthusiastically admire the myths of fairyland or heathen mythology, when confined to romance and



poetry, but would judge them intolerable in serious history.

Having but just upbraided the new school with being too realistic, as shown in the Madonna of the Chair contrasted with the Crowned Queen Virgin of Perugino, Mr Ruskin proceeds to inflict worse treatment for its not being realistic enough. For this purpose he chooses one of Raphael's famous cartoons, the Charge to Peter. And a very graphic little descriptive homily he gives us, well worth reading for its own sake:

"I suppose there is no event of the whole life of Christ to which, in hours of doubt or fear, men turn with more anxious thirst to know the close facts of it, or with more earnest and passionate dwelling upon every syllable of its recorded narrative, than Christ showing Himself to His disciples at the lake of Galilee. There is something pre-eminently open, natural, full-fronting our disbelief in this manifestation. The others recorded after the Resurrection were sudden, phantom-like, occurring to men in profound sorrow and wearied agitation of heart; not, it might seem, safe judges of what they saw. But the agitation was now over. They had gone back to their daily work, thinking still their business lay net-wards, unmeshed from the literal rope and drag, 'Simon Peter saith unto them, I go fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee.' True words enough, having far echo beyond the Galilean hills. That night they caught nothing; but when the morning came, in the clear light of it, behold a figure stood on the shore. They were not thinking of anything but their fruitless hauls. They had no guess who it was. It asked them simply if they had caught anything. They said, no. And it tells them to cast yet again.

And John shades his eyes from the morning sun with his hand to look who it is; and though the glinting of the sea too dazzles him, he makes out who it is, and poor Simon, not to be outrun this time, tightens his fisher's coat about him, and dashes in over the nets. One would have liked to see him swim those hundred yards and stagger to his knees on the beach. Well, the others get to the beach, too, in time, in such slow way, as men in general do get, in this world, to its true shore, much impeded by that wonderful dragging the net with fishes. But they get there, seven of them in all; first the Denier, and then the slowest believer, and then the quickest believer, and then the two throne seekers, and two more we know not who. They sit down on the shore face to face with Him and eat their broiled fish as He bids. And then, to Peter, all dripping still, shivering and amazed, staring at Christ in the sun on the other side of the coal-fire, thinking a little, perhaps, of what happened by another coal-fire when it was colder, and having had no word once changed with him by His master since that look of His—to him, so amazed, comes the question, 'Simon, lovest thou Me?'

So far is admirable, but now comes the injustice, a detailed contrast with Raphael's picture which was never intended, except very partially, to represent the same subject. He continues:

"Try to feel that a little, and think of it till it is true to you; and then take up that infinite monstrosity and hypocrisy, Raphael's cartoon of the Charge to Peter. Note first the bold fallacy—the putting all the Apostles there, a mere lie to serve the Papal heresy of the Petric supremacy by putting them all in the background, while Peter re-

ceives the charge, and making them all witness to it. Note the handsomely curled hair and neatly tied sandals of the men who have been all night in the sea mists and on the slimy decks. Note their convenient dresses for going a-fishing, with trains that lie a yard along the ground, and goodly fringes all made to match, an apostolic fishing costume. Note how Peter especially (whose chief glory was in his wet coat girt about him and his naked limbs) is enveloped in folds and fringes, so as to kneel and hold his keys with grace. No fire of coals at all nor lonely mountain shore, but a pleasant Italian landscape full of villas and churches, and a flock of sheep to be pointed at; and the whole group of Apostles, not round Christ, as they would have been naturally, but straggling away in a line, that they may all be shown. The simple truth is that the moment we look at the picture we feel our belief of the whole thing taken away. There is visibly no possibility of that group ever having existed in any place or on any occasion. It is all a mere mythical absurdity and faded concoction of fringes, muscular arms and curly heads of Greek philosophers."

Now, had Mr Ruskin chosen Raphael's cartoon of the Call of St Peter instead of the Charge to St Peter, perhaps his realistic taste would have been satisfied. There St Peter is the veritable fisherman almost knee-deep in a boat full of fish trying to prostrate himself at our Lord's feet, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." But he has chosen that one of all others which Raphael has treated most entirely mystically. If Raphael had not been a Catholic, he would no doubt have treated the subject realistically, but as a Catholic it was open to him to take the Church's

interpretation. Although only the chief amongst the Apostles are mentioned in the sacred Text, nevertheless, because the Church regards it as a most solemn charge affecting the Universal Church, the artist introduces all the Apostolic College, but those who were corporally absent in such a subordinate way quite in the background with half-averted faces, so that their moral presence but physical absence is most skilfully suggested. Those Apostles who were certainly present are put in the relative prominence in which they appear in the Gospel and in the *cultus* of the Church. St Peter first, then St John, St James, St Andrew, St Thomas, St Philip, and so on. They are all represented as ideal Apostles, with the grand majesty of head, figure and robe which becomes ideal pillars of the Catholic Church. It is a treatise in one glance on the supremacy of St Peter, a faithful commentary on those words, "Simon Peter saith unto them, I go fishing. They say unto him, We also go *with thee*," words on which Mr Ruskin dwells so happily, saying of them, "True words enough, having far echo beyond the Galilean hills." Raphael's picture is of the echo beyond the Galilean hills—even in the fair plains of Italy: the echo will not cease to reverberate through all lands until that Divine Master with His princely band comes to sit in judgement on all the tribes of Israel.

Yet in this picture Mr Ruskin thinks he has caught in its cocoon the canker-worm of religious art—the monster of hypocrisy that ministered to the luxury of the Vatican and ought to be trampled on by "every believing and advancing Christian." He would seem to hold that religious art must be either such as, what he calls,

“the pleasant vision of Bellini and Francia,” or plain, matter-of-fact illustrations of history. He gives the religious artist no alternative. Any middle course would be, what he contemptuously calls, “a composition.” But is a composition in painting less admissible than in poetry? Is not religious and poetic truth often best expressed by a parable, an allegory, or some such composition of the imagination, because it is something more than mere matter-of-fact? Roscoe, in his *Life of Leo the Tenth*, referring to Raphael’s picture of St Leo dissuading Attila from the invasion of Rome, reconciles himself to the introduction of SS. Peter and Paul by saying that in such cases the *pictura loquens* is synonymous with the *muta poesis*—in short, that the picture enjoys all the poetical licence that the poem itself has. Mr Ruskin is not so liberal.

If his literal rendering of the Charge to Peter could be put on canvas by a hand as cunning as Raphael’s, it would be a beautiful and truthful religious picture, but it would still fall short of Raphael’s own cartoon, which expresses something higher, more hidden, more difficult of access, more exclusively belonging to Catholic faith, viz., the Church’s interpretation of the literal Gospel. This is Mr Ruskin’s illustration of art conceived upon a false ideal; but to a Catholic it is as true and in a higher region of truth as his own realistic treatment, which is not founded on the ideal but on the real, using these terms in contradistinction to one another. Mr Ruskin is one of the greatest art critics of the age. His beautiful and eloquent works on art have raised him to the very woolsack in the courts of art-criticism; but do his words, in this case, sound like the calm judicial



sentence of a judge? or are they not more like hot special pleading against an acknowledged criminal? And this is the way that an enthusiastic admirer of the pious and painful efforts of Holman Hunt sits in judgement on the great prince of painters. He can praise the unreality of the enthroned and Crowned Madonna of Perugino, because to him it is far away as fairyland from practical life; but the Papal Supremacy—that was another matter an active spreading disease, so Raphael's picture representing it must be bad art. How bad art? Why, it is not real. It is the false ideal, in fact, a mere lie to serve the Papal heresy of the Petric Supremacy. Other works of Raphael are dragged under the same condemnation. Of St Paul in the St Cecilia of Bologna he says:

“The feeble, subtle, suffering, ceaseless energy and humiliation of St Paul were confused with an idea of meditative Hercules leaning on a sweeping sword.”

But who would not wish a picture of the Apostle of the Gentiles, while it preserved his traditional features handed down even from the Catacombs, to express by its proportions something of his grand position in the New Covenant and history of the Church? An altarpiece is not to be criticized as though it were a mere portrait. Of the Transfiguration he says:

“The mighty presence of Moses and Elias were softened by introductions of delicate grace adopted from dancing nymphs and rising auroras. Do but try to believe that Moses and Elias were really there talking with Christ—Moses in the loveliest heart and midst of the land which once it had been denied him to behold; Elias treading the earth



again, from which he had been swept to Heaven in fire—mightier in closing their own mission—mightier in speaking to Christ of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. They, men of like passions once with us, appointed to speak to the Redeemer of His death. And then, look at Raphael's kicking gracefulness."

Astoundingly beautiful as the Transfiguration is, even any captious child could go on endlessly carping at its details, and naming points in which it falls short of the deep mysteries implied in the Gospel narrative. The position of the hands and feet and the whole attitude of our Lord's body, which reminds Mr Ruskin of dancing nymphs and rising auroras, is intended by Raphael to suggest the contrast yet the connexion between Tabor and Calvary. One foot is just in the position we see it on the Cross. Not so the other, lest there should be too stiff and formal an imitation of the Crucifixion. The hands are almost exactly as on the Cross, and the head raised as when crying, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" but all is bathed in light and beauty. Could any modern school of art even with Mr Ruskin to prompt it produce a religious picture to compare to it? Before the time of Raphael great artists had their pupils, but not only had Raphael pupils, he became the founder of a great school of painting, the grandest perhaps the world will ever see, precisely because he introduced so much science into art. It could not have been otherwise. But this should hardly bring him under the censure of the great English promoter of art schools. How unworthy of a great art-judge to upbraid it with its indispensable mechanical subtlety and craft! And that such injustice should

be stereotyped in the rich classical language of Mr Ruskin is a calamity.

The curious thing is that it is not malice but the genuine blindness of an acute intellect unusually susceptible to the beautiful in religious art. A blindness produced by the Elizabethan tradition. He has the assurance to tell us that the healthy religion of the world did at once just as he has done, and rejected the spurious art of Raphael and his school:

“The necessary result of it [Raphael’s art] was the instant rejection of it by the healthy religion of the world. Raphael ministered with applause to the impious luxury of the Vatican, but was trampled underfoot by every believing and advancing Christian of his own and subsequent times; and thenceforward pure Christianity and high art took separate roads, and fared on as best they might, independently of each other.”

That can only mean that Protestantism has never succeeded in producing a religious picture that reflects one ray of religious inspiration, and for the most part have been contented for three hundred years with engravings and lithographs of these same masterpieces of Raphael.

In the appendix to his work on *The Elements of Drawing* Mr Ruskin says: “You may look for examples of evil, with safe universality of reprobation, being sure that everything you see is bad, at Dominichino,” &c. Every one knows, at least in engravings, the Communion of St Jerome by Dominichino, and any Catholic must see that in that picture the sense of the Eucharistic Presence is so intense that a non-Catholic, whatever his artistic ability and taste, must be at a loss to penetrate its sublimely religious aspect. It is easy to

conceive the position of the saintly ascetic St Augustine, in his *Confessions*, shutting his eyes to all earthly beauty and crying out for only that light "which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world"; or to understand that which Cardinal Newman puts so clearly in his University Education discourses, that all the fine arts, music and especially painting are in danger of secularizing and sensualizing their ministrations to religion. But neither of these is Mr Ruskin's position. He is not contented with the philosophical generalization of the latter, much less with the ascetical renunciation of the former. His eloquence and his hereditary position require the immolation of a living victim, and he chooses one worthy of the occasion:

"To this day, the clear, tasteless poison of the art of Raphael infects with sleep of infidelity the hearts of millions of Christians."

The works of Raphael and his school could scarcely have been more thoroughly adopted than they have been by the Catholic Church or more closely associated with the devotions of her children. How many saints must have poured out the fervour of their hearts before the Madonnas and Mater Dolorosas that Mr Ruskin handles so ruthlessly!

"He [the artist of Raphael's school] could think of the Madonna now very calmly, with no desire to pour out the treasures of earth at her feet, or crown her brows with the golden shafts of heaven. He could think of her as an available subject for the display of transparent shadows, skilful tints, and scientific foreshortenings—as a fair woman, forming, if well painted, a pleasant piece of furniture for the corner of the *boudoir*, and best imagined by combination of the beauties of the prettiest

*contadinas*. He could think of her in her last maternal agony, with academical discrimination; sketch in first her skeleton, invest her in serene science with the muscles or misery or the fibres of sorrow, then cast the grace of antique drapery over the nakedness of her desolation and fulfil with studious lustre of tears and delicately painted pallor the perfect type of the Mater Dolorosa. It was thus that Raphael thought of the Madonna."

When one realizes how emphatically Rome has always maintained its sacred character as the Holy City, the heart of the Catholic world and the home of the saints, while, at the same time, it has been the vast treasure-house of all that is most fascinating in Pagan art, it fills one with a wonder akin to that which is excited when reading of the three holy men walking unscathed amidst the flames of the fiery furnace. So the wonder is not that the works of Raphael should, when contrasted with earlier art, show unmistakable traces of the effect of the Renaissance, but that, endowed with his wonderful gifts, and standing, as he did, in the full tide of that great classical revival, his pictures should be so radiant with the light of religious inspiration, that, as witnesses affirm when the veil is withdrawn from before his Madonna of San Sisto, all present are struck with a sense of awe and silent reverence, which could not be inspired by the representation of mere earthly beauty.

Raphael is not responsible for the evils of the Renaissance, nor could he without the sanctity of a Fra Angelico help being influenced by it. But only a genius like his could have forced the old heathen deity, Pagan art, in the first fervour of its resuscitation to pay such becoming homage to Christianity as Raphael did.

The infidel democrats of the day would persuade us that the Catholic Church is responsible for all the evils of society; and Mr Ruskin, an exceptionally religious man and ultra-Conservative, would make the Catholic Church answerable for whatever is earthly and sensual in the works of Raphael. But one shudders to think what such colossal geniuses as Raphael would have produced, had it not been for the Catholic faith in their hearts and the guiding arm of the Catholic Church.

## V—A Study on the “Grammar of Assent”

**A**SSENT is the ultimate appropriation or assimilation of truth by the mind, and the object of the Essay is to show what are the legitimate conditions on which this assent is to be given.

The name grammar serves to remind us that the essay does not propose itself as a metaphysical treatise, although its subject is psychological, and this is why it purposely avoids reference to any of the schools of metaphysics. It is as little speculative in its enquiries as possible, and avoids appealing to any authority except that of each one's actual experience, because its aim is entirely practical. It is written in opposition to the infidel philosopher of the day, who ignores all the authority and traditions of the past, and who adopts the dangerous error that logical demonstration is the one test of truth, first, because he is conscious of no sacred deposit of truth committed to his good keeping, and is content by the day with what little truth may chance to adhere to his syllogistic lance, and second, because logic is sufficiently applicable in the only region of truth in which he has any belief, viz., that which comes under the senses.

The essay consists of two parts—five chapters in each—and the fifth chapter in each part is an application to revealed religion of the principles educed in the preceding chapters.



In the first part the relation and contrast between holding and apprehending is shown, and in what degree they are necessary for assent. The distinction between notional and real assent is then drawn out and finally applied to religion. In the second part the unconditional nature of assent is insisted upon. Assent is shown to be sometimes simple and sometimes complex, sometimes real and sometimes notional, and so, though one assent may be stronger than another, it is not therefore more final and unconditional in its nature. Then certitude is contrasted with assent as a complex assent or an intellectual exercise on an existing assent. Certitude is shown to be indefectible if based on rational grounds, accompanied by a sense of finality and permanence. Different kinds of inference are then distinguished, and at last we are introduced to the illative sense as the real natural pillar and ground of assent to which logical demonstration is at best but a useful appendix. The indispensable support received from this illative sense is pointed out in the ordinary routine of life, and its application to revelation is beautifully illustrated in the congeniality of the Christian with the Jewish religion.

In what follows I have attempted to put some of the leading principles of the essay into somewhat the form of a dialogue.

Sceptic, Philosopher and Believer were three companions travelling through life together. They were all refined, well-educated men, probably University men, so that they were able to enjoy one another's company without any open rupture, in spite of their very essential difference in opinion and belief. Sceptic had a wan and haggard face, and seemed often very much depressed, but he

always met sympathetic enquiries with the most assuring protestations that he had nothing on his mind. He did not talk much, but when he did speak it was generally in the interrogative form. He seemed to doubt about everything, and although he was obliged to make up his mind sufficiently to act in the ordinary concerns of life, he thought it a duty to profess uncertainty about everything.

Philosopher had a fine intellectual head, but a bright, quick, restless eye. He professed to believe everything that he could prove, but nothing else, and declared that logical demonstration was the only ground of certainty. Nevertheless, although he showed the greatest ability in argument and professed to be quite certain when he had drawn an inference, his certainty did not seem to have that solid hold of his mind which certainty is generally supposed to claim. He was often found to have abandoned the conclusion of yesterday, because he had discovered some obscurity in the proof for the premises on which that conclusion was based.

Believer was at first sight of a very unassuming appearance, although on a closer acquaintance the peace and serenity of mind which he enjoyed gave his face a dignity more impressive than even the natural beauty of Philosopher. Though he did not affect to despise his companions, he was not reserved in expressing how much he differed from them. He said that truth was the food of the mind, and that, as with food, it was not sufficient to eat it and then reject it, as Sceptic did, nor was it sufficient to eat and digest it without assimilating it, as Philosopher did. He maintained that the act by which the mind assimilates truth is the

act of assent. He did full justice to the scholarship of Sceptic, and to the science and learning of Philosopher, but he said that truth, when it had developed the faculties of Sceptic, merely passed through without taking up its abode there, and that it had made the mind of Philosopher little better than a good reasoning machine: to use St Paul's words, "He had been ever learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth." Believer allowed that logic is most useful in preparing the way for assent, and for analysing truth already assented to. He also allowed that logic is necessary as a weapon to expose false logic, but he said that there is danger that while using a dissecting instrument as a weapon, the delicate anatomy of the truth at issue should be mutilated. We ought not to suppose, he said, that logic is the one only test of truth, still less that it is the one naturally appointed means of acquiring truth. A truth which has been most legitimately inferred has not therefore necessarily been acquired. The act of acquisition or final appropriation is quite a distinct mental act from inference, though often consequent on inference.

Truth, he said, could never be at peace in the mind if it were inseparable from logic. It would always be exposed to the capricious carping of any clever sophist. Besides, the most momentous truths of morality and revelation would have to be abandoned, for they do not rest on logic, although they can be partially subjected to logical analysis, which is useful for controversial purposes, but cannot compel assent. Believer did not depreciate logic from any lack of ability to use it. At one time he used it with such good effect that Philosopher was forced to accept many articles of faith

as legitimate conclusions. But this was counter-acted by Sceptic on the other side, who used logic with equal dexterity. He objected that it was impossible to assent to what you could not understand, and that, as the most fundamental doctrines of religion are incomprehensible, such as the Unity and Trinity of God, they could not be objects of assent. He said he considered that the one great immorality committed by mankind, which included all others, was believing without demonstrable evidence. Believer acknowledged that this was plausible, but said that it was based on the false premise that comprehension and assent must be in equal ratio. Experience, he said, shows that God has so constituted the mind that it can give full assent on something less than comprehension, what for distinction we might call apprehension. Believer said that if Sceptic would only examine his own mind he would be obliged to acknowledge that there are many things in the constitution of his mind and body which he never dreamed of calling in question, but which he could not comprehend. He apprehended them, and apprehended them as incomprehensible, and fully assented to them. And as God has given us a natural power to humble our minds so far as to yield assent to the incomprehensible in nature, accepting the simple assertion of fact as if it were proof, so in religion He gives a corresponding power, the grace of faith, to assent to mysteries on His own divine assertion. Are not, said Believer, the limits of our mental faculties sufficiently confined by nature without being artificially penned in by logical formulary? We all have aspirations after truth far beyond what we can hope to realize in this world at least; must

we be condemned to reject those many great natural and supernatural truths which must be only partially within our reach, simply because we do not understand them or cannot demonstrate them? may I not enjoy that degree of possession of them which consists in fully assenting to their truth on authority? "It is not necessary," Scripture says, "for thee to see with thy eyes those things that are hid," and "many things are shown thee above the understanding of men, and the suspicion of them hath deceived many, and hath detained their minds in vanity" (Ecclus iii).

Philosopher here interposed: You are begging the question. You assume that they are true, and then ask if you may not believe them. Believer replied, I acknowledge I am begging the question, if you mean that I believe before I have logical proof. You must own that there are many things true in nature which you cannot test by logic; it is nothing then against these supernatural truths that they are beyond the reach of logic. When logic proves them false, then it will be time enough to exclaim against begging the question. I maintain that we are all constitutionally beggars, and do all beg innumerable questions in the daily routine of life, and if we persistently refused to beg at all we should soon be starved to death intellectually and morally.

But, persisted Philosopher, logic is the necessary law of thought, it must really underlie all acquisition of truth, and although that which is held illogically may be a truth, it is not truly held. We are bound by a natural law to withhold our assent to assertion until we have dissected the logical anatomy of the assertion, and so demonstrated its truth. Believer protested against



this as a despotic cruel law, not made by the God who created the world, who enables us to enjoy and love what we cannot understand.

He said: There is no necessary connection between inference and assent, and those assents which are based on inference are at first merely notional, and require a distinct act of assimilation by the mind before they can be said to be practically acquired. Logic, he said, has no power to make us understand. It is by its nature a chain of reasoning, dangling loose at both ends until you make one end fast to an assent. Logic is always hypothetical, assent is never so. If the major, if the minor, then the conclusion. And if you have proved your premises, you must have done so in the same hypothetical way until you fall back on something stronger, something less conditional in form than logic. The following illustration may help to explain.

The objective beauty in some particular form and face is a certain kind of truth. On what laws does it depend? Let us suppose that it depends on the perfection of physical anatomy being perfectly carried out in all its minutest details. Suppose the beauty is the result of this perfect physical development. Now, in order for me to appreciate and assent to the beauty of this face and form, must I trace the underlying anatomy on which it depends? If I cannot trace it, must I abstain from such assent? If I am scientific enough to do so, does it follow that I appreciate the beauty which I suppose it produces? I may be the most perfect anatomist conceivable, and be blind to beauty. Lastly, suppose I do appreciate the beauty, and try to convince a captious critic of it by analysing the anatomy, I may force him to accept my con-



clusions as a valid inference, but I cannot ensure his assent. While, then, the objective beauty depends upon the perfect fulfilment of the physical process of anatomical development, the assent to the beauty depends upon no corresponding mental process, but on a sense which might be called the æsthetical sense.

Now, to apply the illustration, I suppose logic may underlie truth, as I suppose the anatomy to underlie the beauty. But logic, because it is the anatomy of truth, is not therefore the necessary law of thought, for thought often follows it correctly, and yet fails to grasp the truth in the end, as the perfect anatomist may fail to see the beauty at which he has really arrived. The truth itself depends on its anatomical perfection or logic; the assent to that truth does not depend on any process of tracing that logical anatomy, but upon a sense which has been named the illative sense.

Philosopher here put the important question: What security is there that this illative sense speaks truth and not falsehood? A process can be tested, but how can you test a sense? Believer replied: Exactly so, a process requires testing, but a sense does not, for the very reason that it is a sense. Our bodily senses do not require testing before we assent to their assertions. The conscience is one of the most important forms of this illative sense. A good conscience no doubt is in strict accordance with the laws of moral theology, and the conscience may be educated according to those laws. But in practice the conscience is always a dictator, not a logician—a sense of right and wrong, not a process of demonstration.

Sceptic here interposed, and said if that was all

the security that Believer had to offer, he should still continue to be certain of nothing. Believer said he would just like to know what Sceptic meant by security. Why resign all claim to the possession of truth because you cannot have a supernatural title-deed? Is not our state of being, natural and supernatural, very much a state of trust, in some sense a venture? Is not certainty in the natural order and faith in the supernatural order an act of trust? You say you trust your senses, your eyes and ears, and you are quite right, for you are certain of what they tell you. Why, then, stop short at the bodily senses? Why should not the soul trust her own senses as well as those of the body. They are not separable, for the bodily senses are only windows through which the soul stretches her illative sense. When St Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life," he was making an act of perfect trust and venture. A supernatural grace was given him to venture an assent where his bodily senses gave no evidence. On the contrary, St Thomas withheld his assent to our Lord's Resurrection until his bodily senses gave evidence, then he assented. We are told that he would have done a wiser thing if he had trusted his illative sense at the word of his brother Apostles, instead of waiting for the logic of his bodily senses. It may be objected that the words trust and venture imply risk, and in real faith there can be no risk. But I should say that in many cases the precise virtue of an act of faith consists in being certain that there is no risk where there is no demonstrable evidence of security, in a case which to the natural man implies risk. When St Peter stepped out of his vessel on to the restless

waters of the sea of Galilee at the word of his Master, there was not really the slightest risk. Risk is entirely a subjective state. It is a dubiousness as to the event of an act. To entirely quell and cast out that doubt by a supernatural power, or to see that it is groundless by a supernatural light, would be the special virtue of such an act of faith.

What has all this to do with the illative sense? asked Philosopher impatiently. This, replied Believer, that the power and light of faith is conferred not on the natural reasoning powers, but on the illative sense, so that often where the reasoning power is weak, the faith is very strong.

St Augustine seems to have gradually become quite convinced of this, to judge by what he says in his *Confessions* (B. vi, 6):

“With joy I heard Ambrose in his sermons to the people oftentimes most diligently recommend this text for a rule, ‘The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life’; whilst he drew aside the mystic veil, laying open spiritually what, according to the letter, seemed to teach something unsound; teaching herein nothing that offended me, though he taught what I knew not as yet whether it were true. For I kept my heart from assenting to anything, fearing to fall headlong; but by hanging in suspense I was the worse killed. For I wished to be as assured of the things I saw not, as I was that seven and three are ten. For I was not so mad as to think that even this could not be comprehended; but I desired to have other things as clear as this, whether things corporeal, which were not present to my senses, or spiritual, whereof I knew not how to conceive, except corporeally. And by believing might I have been

cleared, that so the eyesight of my soul being cured, might in some way be directed to Thy truth, which abideth always and in no part faileth. But as it happens that one who has tried a bad physician fears to trust himself with a good one, so was it with the health of my soul, which could not be healed but by believing, and lest it should believe falsehoods, refused to be cured; resisting Thy hands, who hast prepared the medicines of faith, and hast applied them to the diseases of the whole world, and given unto them so great authority.

“Being led, however, from this to prefer the Catholic doctrine, I felt that her proceeding was most unassuming and honest, in that she required to be believed things not demonstrated (whether it was that they could in themselves be demonstrated, but not to certain persons, or could not at all be), whereas among the Manichees our credulity was mocked by a promise of certain knowledge, and then so many most fabulous and absurd things were imposed to be believed, because they could not be demonstrated. Then Thou, O Lord, little by little, with most tender and most merciful hand touching and composing my heart, didst persuade me—considering what innumerable things I believed, which I saw not, nor was present while they were done, as so many things in secular history, so many reports of places and of cities which I have not seen, so many of friends, so many of physicians, so many continually of other men, which unless we should believe we should do nothing at all in this life; lastly, with how unshaken an assurance I believed of what parents I was born, which I could not know had I not believed upon hearsay—consider-

ing all this, Thou didst persuade me that not they who believed Thy books (which Thou hast established in so great authority among almost all nations) but they who believed them not, were to be blamed."

St Augustine, then, seems to have been at one time in the same state of mind as you, Philosopher, appear to be. He was not satisfied with the illative senses. He withheld his assent, wanting mathematical demonstration. Gradually it dawned upon him that it was of no use his insisting upon laying down his own conditions for certainty, and obstinately refusing assent on some ideal theory of perfect knowledge inconsistent with the present limits and imperfection of our state of being. He felt that in the ordinary routine of life he was obliged to trust his illative sense; why then might not God have chosen to confer the grace of faith through the humble faculty of the illative sense, rather than through the more ostentatious channel of demonstrative reason?

The following extracts from some of the earlier works of Dr Newman seem to bear upon the same subject:

*Development*, chap. i, sec. iii, § 7.—"It may be asked whether a development is itself a logical process; and if by this is meant a conscious reasoning from premises to conclusion, of course the answer must be in the negative. An idea grows in the mind by remaining there; it becomes familiar and distinct, and is viewed in its relations; it suggests other ideas, and these again others, subtle, recondite, original, according to the character, intellectual and moral, of the recipient; and thus a body of thought is gradually formed without his recognising what is going on within



him. And all this while, or at least from time to time, external circumstances elicit into formal statements the thoughts which are coming into being in the depths of his mind, and soon he has to begin to defend them; and then again a further process must take place, of analysing his statements and ascertaining their dependence one on another. And thus he is led to regard as consequences, and to trace to principles, what hitherto he has discerned by a moral perception, and adopted on sympathy; and logic is brought in to arrange and inculcate what no science was employed in gaining. . . .

“Minds develop step by step, without looking behind them or anticipating their goal, and without either intention or promise of forming a system. Afterwards, however, this logical character which the whole wears becomes a test that the process has been a true development, not a perversion or corruption, from its evident naturalness, precision, and majesty of its advance, and the harmony of its proportions, like the tall growth, and graceful branching, and rich foliage to some vegetable production. . . .

“Let us take a definition which some years since was given of rationalism. To rationalize is to ask improperly how we are to account for certain things, to be unwilling to believe them unless they can be accounted for, that is, referred to something else as a cause, to some existing system, as harmonizing with them or taking them up into itself. Rationalism is characterized by two peculiarities, its love of systematizing, and its basing its system upon personal experience or the evidence of sense. If this be rationalism, it is totally distinct from development; to develop is



to receive conclusions from received truth, to rationalize is to receive nothing but conclusions from received truths; to develop is positive, to rationalize is negative; the essence of development is to extend belief, of rationalism to contract it."

In his *Essay on Development*, chap. vi, sec. i, § 2, speaking of Hume, he says: "Here this author lays down that a lover of truth is he who loves a valid argument, and that such faith as is not credulity or enthusiasm is always traceable to a process of reason, and varies with its cogency. . . . It is the very objection used by Celsus, that Christians were but parallel to the credulous victims of jugglers or of devotees, who itinerated through the pagan populations. He says that some do not even wish to give or to receive a reason for their faith, but say, 'Do not enquire but believe,' and 'Thy faith will save thee,' and 'A bad thing is the world's wisdom, and foolishness is a good.'

"How does Origen answer the charge? By denying the fact, and speaking of reason as proving the Scriptures to be divine, and faith after that conclusion receiving the contents, as it is now popular to maintain? Far from it; he grants the fact alleged against the Church, and defends it. He observes that, considering the engagements and necessary ignorance of the multitude of men, it is a very happy circumstance that a substitute is provided for these philosophical exercises which Christianity allows and encourages, but does not impose on the individual. 'Which,' he asks, 'is the better, for them to believe without reason, and thus reform anyhow and gain a benefit from their belief in the punishment of sinners and the

reward of well-doers, or to refuse their conversion on mere belief, except they devote themselves to an intellectual enquiry?'"

In "Usurpations of Reason," Oxford Sermons, iii, page 40, 1st edition, the author says: "There is no necessary connexion between the intellectual and moral principles of our nature; on religious subjects we may prove anything or overthrow anything, and can arrive at truth but accidentally, if we merely investigate by what is commonly called reason, which is in such matters but the instrument at best, in the hands of the legitimate judge, spiritual discernment. When we consider how common it is in the world at large to consider the intellect as the characteristic part of our nature, the silence of Scripture in regard to it (not to mention its positive disparagement of it) is very striking. In the Old Testament scarcely any mention is made of the existence of the reason as a distinct and chief attribute of the mind."

In the same Sermon, page 43, "The foolish things of the world confound the wise far more completely than the weak the mighty. Human philosophy was beaten from its usurped province, but not by any counter-philosophy; and unlearned faith, establishing itself by its own inherent strength, ruled the reason as far as its own interests were concerned, and from that time has employed it in the Church, first as a captive, then as a servant; not as an equal, and in nowise (far be it) as a patron."

Page 48.—"We must deduct from the real use of the reason in religious inquiries, whatever is the mere setting right of its own mistakes."

Page 50.—"While faith was engaged in the exact and well-instructed devotion to Christ,

which no words can suitably describe, the forward Reason stepped in upon the yet unenclosed ground of doctrine, and attempted to describe there, from its own resources, an image of the Invisible. Henceforth the Church was in self-defence to employ the gifts of the intellect in the cause of God, to trace out (as near as might be) the faithful shadow of those truths which unlearned piety admits and acts upon, without the medium of intellectual representation."

Page 51.—"So alert is the instinctive power of an educated conscience, that by some secret faculty, and without any intelligible reasoning process, it seems to detect moral truth wherever it lies hid, and feels a conviction of its own accuracy, which bystanders cannot account for."

Page 54.—"The usurpations of reason may be dated from the Reformation. Then, together with the tyranny, the legitimate authority of the ecclesiastical power was more or less overthrown; and in some places its ultimate basis also, the moral sense. One school of men resisted the Church, another went further and rejected the supreme authority of the law of conscience. Accordingly, revealed religion was in a great measure stripped of its proof; for the existence of the Church had been its external evidence, and its internal had been supplied by the moral sense. Reason now undertook to repair the demolition it had made, and to render the proof of Christianity independent both of the Church and of the law of nature. From that time (if we take a general view of its operations) it has been engaged first in making difficulties by the mouth of unbelievers, and then claiming power in the Church as a reward for having, by the mouth of apologists, partially removed them."

Page 58.—“Our plain business is . . . to be careful, while we freely cultivate the the reason in all its noble functions, to keep it in its subordinate place in our nature, while we employ it industriously in the service of religion, not to imagine that, in this service, we are doing any great thing, or directly advancing its influence over the heart; and while we promote the education of others in all useful knowledge, to beware of admitting any principle of union or standard of reward, which may practically disparage the supreme authority of Christian fellowship.”

Faith without Demonstration, vol. vi, Sermon 23.—“Faith and humility are the only spells which conjure up the image of heavenly things into the letter of inspiration; and faith and humility consist, not in going about to prove, but in the outset confiding on the testimony of others. Thus, afterwards, on looking back, we shall find we have proved what we did not set out to prove. We cannot control our reasoning powers, nor exert them at our will or at any moment. It is so with other faculties of the mind also. Who can command his memory? The more you try to recall what you have forgotten, the less is your chance of success. Leave thinking about it, and perhaps memory returns. And in like manner, the more you set yourself to argue and prove, in order to discover truth, the less likely are you to reason correctly and to infer profitably. You will be caught by sophisms, and think them splendid discoveries. Be sure the highest reason is not to reason on system or by rules of argument, but in a natural way; not with formal intent to draw out proofs, but trusting to God’s blessing that you may gain a right impression of what you read. If your reasoning powers

are weak, using argumentative forms will not make them stronger. It will enable you to dispute acutely and to hit objections, but not to discover truth. There is nothing creative, nothing progressive in exhibitions of argument. The utmost they do is to enable us to state well what we have already discovered by the tranquil exercise of our reason."

## VI—Belief in Mysteries: Theory in the “Grammar of Assent”

**M**R F. J. S— read a paper in January, 1875, before a Philosophical Society, of which several prominent Catholics were members, entitled: “A Theory of Dr Newman’s as to believing in Mysteries.”

The first part of the paper is devoted to controverting Cardinal Newman’s statement in his *Grammar of Assent*, to the effect that in a proposition consisting of a subject, copula and predicate the minimum of apprehension on which it is possible to ground an assent is the apprehension of the predicate. I will first explain what I think the Cardinal means. His object is to show that if there is no apprehension of the terms at all, then assent is a mental impossibility; that supposing, for example, our Lord himself was to speak to me in Syro-Chaldaic, of which I understand nothing, I could not assent. I could say from my heart, “Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius,” but nothing has been presented to my intelligence to assent to, therefore assent is impossible. But if I understand the predicate, then there is at once a footing for an assent. Observe, he does not say that this knowledge of the predicate, is sufficient of itself to compel assent, as a distinct knowledge of both terms might do, but that there is, in this apprehension of the predicate, a sufficient mental process presented to the intellect, which will be accepted in an act of assent if it



brings its credentials from a trustworthy authority. But no amount of credentials from the highest authority could elicit for an entirely unknown proposition more than assertion.

Cardinal Newman's illustration is this: "If a child asked, 'What is Lucern?' and is answered, 'Lucern is *Medicago sativa* of the class *Diadelphia* and order *Decandria*,' and henceforth says obediently, 'Lucern is *Medicago sativa*, etc.,' he makes no act of assent to the proposition which he enuntiates, but speaks like a parrot. But if he is told, 'Lucern is food for cattle,' and is shown cows grazing in a meadow, then, though he never saw lucern, and knows nothing at all about it, besides what he has learnt from the predicate, he is in a position to make as genuine an assent to the proposition 'Lucern is food for cattle' on the word of his informant as if he knew ever so much more about lucern; and as soon as he has got as far as this, he may go further. He now knows enough about lucern to enable him to apprehend propositions which have lucern for their predicate, should they come before him for assent, as 'That field is sown with lucern,' or 'Clover is not lucern.'" The above passage is quoted by Mr S—— from the *Grammar*, pages 11 to 13.

Mr S—— substitutes for Cardinal Newman's thesis the following: "We can assent to propositions only when we distinctly understand all their terms, and can distinctly imagine, conceive or otherwise represent to our minds the facts that they state."

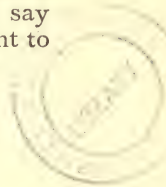
It is not difficult to recognize in this thesis the Rationalist's instinctive dread of resting his knowledge upon anything except his own self-sufficient reason. He imagines that he is in a position to

dictate the terms on which he will deign to receive knowledge; he forgets that he is only required modestly to analyse the mental phenomena which were created without his consent from the beginning and will continue to the end. Suppose some created thing of which Mr S—— knows absolutely nothing (and even he would hardly deny that this is a possible supposition), and some one of high authority on the subject were to predicate something of that unknown thing, Mr S—— would be able to assent, however much he might dislike doing so without first of all distinctly understanding the subject. If this is granted, it is all that Cardinal Newman contends for.

But let us see how Mr S—— tries to make good his thesis. He first takes Cardinal Newman's illustration, "Lucern is food for cattle," and reminds us that Cardinal Newman says that the child can assent to this proposition if it knows the meaning of the words "food for cattle." Then he substitutes for the copula "is" the Hindoostanee for the same, "hai," and then he triumphantly defies the child to assent to the proposition, "Lucern food for cattle hai." Therefore, he concludes, the child must know the meaning of the copula in order to be able to assent to the proposition. Is not this a very captious way of demanding what in substance Cardinal Newman would grant at once? Of course the child must know the meaning of the copula, but that knowledge was included in the original supposition. A proposition was the case proposed; now if you eliminate the copula or substitute a hieroglyphic it ceases to be a proposition at all. Besides the copula is not strictly speaking one of the terms of the proposition, but the formal link between

the two terms. Mr S—— seems to fall into the very fault of which he accuses Cardinal Newman later on, viz., that of regarding propositions simply as collections of words, not of words representing ideas. He then continues with Cardinal Newman's illustration and claims Cardinal Newman's amplification of his illustration—the words, “and is shown cows grazing in the meadow”—as an acknowledgement that the child must begin with knowing that lucern is a vegetable growing in a field, in order to assent. Whereas Cardinal Newman only adds these words as an amplification of the predicate, to ensure that the child really understands the meaning of the predicate “food for cattle.”

But even suppose these words were omitted and the child imagined oat-cake as the food for cattle, nevertheless it could assent to the information, “Lucern is food for cattle,” though with an erroneous imagination attached to it, as every one knows children often do. After this Cardinal Newman continues, “The child can assent to propositions which have lucern for their predicate, as, ‘That field is sown with lucern,’ or, ‘Clover is not lucern.’” No, says Mr S——, not unless the child has been shown the lucern growing in the field. Certainly the showing the field to the child would help its knowledge, but it is not essential. Say the child was not shown anything, and only knows that lucern is food for cattle, and then is told, “That field is sown with lucern,” it knows that that field is sown with that particular kind of food for cattle which is called lucern. Or again, it is told, “Clover is not lucern”; then it has no right, as Mr S—— says it has, to say clover is not food for cattle, but it has a right to



understand that clover is not that particular kind of food for cattle which is lucern.

But what is most surprising, after taking all these pains to establish his thesis, Mr S—— seems to forget what it was that he started with and concludes by saying, "The inference is that no assent can be given to more of a proposition than the person assenting understands." Why then did he make the child assent to more than it understood and so fall into a false deduction? This conclusion of Mr S—— sounds more like Cardinal Newman's thesis than his own. Cardinal Newman maintains that when you understand the predicate there is room for assent. Mr S—— maintains that before you can assent you must distinctly understand all the terms. Now he asserts, as if some one had denied it, that you can assent so far as you can understand.

It is at this stage of his imaginary triumph that Mr S—— thinks that he may venture to point out the principle on which Cardinal Newman's error rests. It is, as I have said above, that Cardinal Newman mistakes words for ideas. After this, Mr S—— recollects his original thesis which he so lightly dropped and tries to illustrate it in the following proposition, "London is the capital of England." This proposition, he says, supposes that you know that London is a town, and if you don't know that, then the proposition is meaningless to you. How can this be? Does not the predicate tell us that London is the capital of England? We are supposed to understand the predicate, that the capital of England means the chief town of England. May we not understand that such is London though we never saw or heard the word London before? This is just like insisting that the

child must know that lucern is a vegetable growing in a field before you allow the child to assent that lucern is food for cattle.

This was rather an unfortunate illustration for Mr S——'s thesis, but the next is decidedly more clever. He says, You cannot even tell which is the predicate, unless you know the meaning of all the terms of the proposition. He then gives us another mixture of Hindoostanee and English, "Bahut Gurm is the capital of British India." Now, at first sight, Bahut Gurm appears to be the name of a town, of which it is predicated that it is the capital of British India. But the truth is Bahut Gurm means very hot and is the predicate not the subject. So it is, "Very hot is the capital of British India." All that need be said in answer to this objection is simply, choose whichever you like to make your predicate, and if it is apprehended, there is possibility of yielding assent. If on the contrary the subject is apprehended and the predicate not, no assent is possible, only assertion.

Take the previous illustration, "London is the capital of England." Suppose the word London is Hindoostanee to me. I don't know whether it is a name or means "very hot," and you say, "The capital of England is London." Now, I reply, if the term which I understand is the one you really mean to predicate of the other, then I can assent, but if on the contrary you really wish to predicate London of the capital of England, then I say I am unable to assent, because, though I understand the meaning of the words "capital of England," the word London may mean anything or nothing.

This is applicable to the other example, "Bahut Gurm is the capital of British India." I under-



stand the second term but not the first. If you intend to predicate the one I understand of the one I don't understand, then I can assent. But if you wish to predicate the term I don't understand of the term I do understand, then I am unable to assent even though your authority is indisputable.

The next example of a proposition which Mr S—— gives, is, "I saw him." He says that Cardinal Newman would only require the word *him* to be understood. But what is predicated? "Saw him." If that is understood, "I" may stand for anybody or anything, there is something intelligible to assent to. We are now presented with two specimens of intentional nonsense, "Lightning consoles thunder," and "It is six miles from one o'clock to London Bridge." Here Mr S—— says that he requires not only a distinct knowledge of all the terms but also an understanding of their collective force. He shows by this that he does not realize what Cardinal Newman is saying. His fear of being obliged to admit the truth of what he cannot understand confuses his mind and leads him to imagine that Cardinal Newman says that to apprehend the predicate in a proposition precludes the possibility of being imposed upon by a falsehood or an absurdity and assenting to it. Whereas Cardinal Newman says that then and not till then is there something for the mind to assent to. Of the examples of nonsense given, the first does not fulfil Cardinal Newman's condition and therefore cannot be assented to. The predicate "consoles thunder" is unapprehensible; if it were "Lightning consoles me or Mr S——," it would be apprehensible though absurd and could be assented to. In the second example of nonsense, "It is six miles from one o'clock to London



Bridge," one o'clock might be the sign of a public house or the name of some locality; and indeed, the form chosen "from . . . to" in which the proposition is cast, obliges you to assume as much whether it be a fact or not, and in this case assent is possible. To use the word "from" and "to" without intending them to refer to places would be to drop the form of a proposition altogether and so make the example inapplicable. Cardinal Newman's first example, "Lucern is food for cattle," would have served his purpose as well if it had been untrue, as, "Lucern is food for men," or nonsense, as, "Lucern is moonshine." I withhold assent to the first because it is untrue and to the second because it is preposterous, but to neither for lack of apprehension. Indeed it is precisely because I apprehend the one as untrue and the other as nonsense that I withhold my assent. But as Mr S—— is going presently to ask us to reject mysteries because we do not fully apprehend them, he wisely prepares the way by trying to prove that we always reject nonsense merely on the ground of insufficient apprehension of the terms. Few would have been the lessons of his childhood if he had refused to accept as true, i.e., to assent without "a distinct knowledge of all the terms and an understanding of their collective force." Here again Mr S——'s modest assurance is in the ascendant, and he tells us that Cardinal Newman does not know what nonsense is. "I think," he says, "that many people do not clearly understand the strict meaning of the word 'nonsense.' I do not think that Dr Newman himself does so." Perhaps we might so far agree as to admit that Mr S—— has in this case established his right to give an opinion about nonsense. The

pilot who runs his ship on the rocks has qualified to give some evidence as to their nature and locality. Accordingly Mr S—— thus concludes the first part of his paper: "Nonsense means 'not sense,' and this implies 'that sensation is an indispensable condition of language and of knowledge.' Thus where there is no sensation there is no meaning, and where there is no meaning thought ends and vain jargon begins."

These words have no direct bearing upon the thesis that assent is possible when the predicate is apprehended. But the truth is, they have a prospective aim. Mr S—— is going to attack belief in mysteries. So he gives a literal interpretation to the word nonsense, in which, as equivalent to nonsensation, it includes three very different classes of propositions—one, the terms of which I apprehend as preposterous; another, the terms of which I do not apprehend at all; and a third, the terms of which I can only apprehend in an unreal and notional manner. He has thus under cover of austere exactness in the meaning of his terms prepared a place of ridicule into which he hopes to drag the mysteries of Christian faith. The most momentous truths are nonsensational, and in that sense may be called nonsense. But they are not therefore nonsense either as preposterous or as inapprehensible.

We now come to Mr S——'s real difficulty. All the conjuring up to this in Hindoostanee has been merely an indispensable preparation for laying the rationalist's most inveterate ghost, the hateful question, "Is it possible to assent to a mystery?"

O'er all there hung a shadow and a fear,  
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,  
And said as plain as whisper in the ear  
The place is haunted.

And Mr S—— candidly acknowledges that the answer depends upon the decision of the question which has already been discussed as to the amount of apprehension requisite for making an assent.

Cardinal Newman's theory is very simple. He supposes, say, two truths to be presented to us for assent. Either of them is conceivable taken by itself, but together they are inconceivable, not inapprehensible, for it is precisely because we apprehend them that we recognise them as together inconceivable. If we could not even apprehend them, we should not know whether they made a mystery or not.

But how is the inconceivableness of two truths taken together to be accounted for, since truth must always be consistent with itself? Cardinal Newman said, "Our notions of things are never simply commensurate with the things themselves. They may represent them up to a certain point. After that point is reached, the notion and the thing part company, and then the notion if still used as the representative of the thing will work out conclusions not inconsistent with itself but with the thing to which it no longer corresponds."

Against this theory Mr S—— most consistently repeats his previous misunderstanding. "If you can assent," he says, "to every proposition of which you can understand the predicate, you can assent to a proposition conveying incompatible notions. You could assent, for example, to the proposition, 'Black is white.'" This is Mr S——'s

mistake throughout. Here he gives us a proposition which fulfils all his own conditions for assent—viz., not only a distinct knowledge of all the terms used, but also an understanding of their collective force, and yet he would scorn the idea that he was obliged to assent to such a contradictory proposition. Nevertheless, he really thinks that Cardinal Newman has committed himself to assent to any contradictory proposition of which he apprehends the predicate. Cardinal Newman has done no such absurdity, any more than Mr S—— has committed himself to assent to every proposition of which he understands all the terms and their collective force as well. All he says is : I can assent, but I reserve my right to dissent if my apprehension discovers a contradiction. So also does Cardinal Newman claim his right to dissent to nonsense, while he maintains that there is apprehension enough for assent if the proposition were sense. If Cardinal Newman had said, “You *must* assent when you apprehend the predicate,” then there would be force in Mr S——’s objection; but he simply says *can*—that this is the minimum of apprehension on which such a mental act is possible. Of course, that amount of apprehension is no guarantee of the truth of the proposition, and without the support of good authority assent would be foolish credulity. But Mr S—— wants to do without authority; therefore he must never assent unless he has sufficient apprehension to show him the truth or error of the proposition. This may be satisfactory to human pride, but it is at the expense of living in ignorance of most religious and moral truth. Besides, it does not fit the constitution of the human mind. Mr S——, like most other human beings, did not learn the lessons of his

childhood in such independence of all authority. Nor can he say that he did not then really assent, but gradually, as he came to realize the facts, for that only postpones the humiliation. It is flattering to intellectual pride to make a selection of the truths we have accepted and acted on all our lives and say that those only we acknowledge which we fully understand, for these must have been arrived at through a long and complicated series of less perfectly apprehended propositions assented to on authority until at last we fall back on the simple apprehension of the predicate assented to on authority. How many truths there must be which are quite unknown to Mr S——! Why should he deny his mind the capability of accepting any predicate concerning them, except on condition of being admitted to a previous knowledge of the subject, which previous knowledge must have been accepted on the same terms, and so back, *ad infinitum*?

Such doctrine simply cuts the creature for ever from the knowledge of its Creator, for never can any creature know that infinite subject except in more or less imperfect predicates. Mr S—— now gives us two alternatives. Either a mystery is *nonsense* (here he uses nonsense in its ordinary opprobrious meaning), or it is a *riddle*. That is, either it is explicable and then it is a *riddle*, or inexplicable and then it is *nonsense*. To this I answer that nonsense is a form of words chosen neither to express nor to hide a meaning. A riddle is a form of words chosen to hide a meaning. A mystery is a form of words chosen as the greatest effort of language to express a truth which is above the full reach of human words or understanding. It is replete with meaning, but the



meaning overflows and stretches far beyond the power of the words. It can be indefinitely explained more and more and indefinitely more and more clearly understood, but never perfectly explained or understood. Here, Mr S—— rather abruptly changes his ground from the discussion of a simple proposition to that of an inference. He says, "If contradictory consequences can be drawn from premises which are apparently true and complete, the proper inference is not that the contradictions are true but that the premises are not really true and complete." He is right to infer that the premises are incomplete, as Cardinal Newman has told him, but he is not right to infer that they are necessarily otherwise false.

Mr S—— now expresses his strong disapproval of Cardinal Newman's implying any connection or similarity between assenting to a proposition and assenting to its truth. To take an example, if I have unlimited confidence in Mr S——'s veracity and knowledge, and he enunciates something to me in Hindoostanee, I can assent to the truth of the enunciation, but I cannot assent to the proposition itself because I do not even apprehend the predicate. This Cardinal Newman would say was to believe *implicite*. This word shocks Mr S——. He translates it implicitly and then complains of its ambiguity as commonly used, for its technical force is lost sight of in ordinary conversation. Cardinal Newman italicises the word *implicite*, and says that it is a word used in the schools. But Mr S—— will not allow such an abuse of language. It seems to him as immoral as the old legal fictions which unscrupulous lawyers invented to justify despotic cruelty, and he is afraid that this ambiguous *implicite* is in



vented to extort his assent to what he cannot understand. The only instance of this kind of belief which his own introspection can discover and sanction is his belief in Logarithms given in Todhunter's Trigonometry. And this he justifies because he says he can understand the method by which the intelligible result is said to have been obtained. Mr S—— now supposes the unintelligible words "Conx Ompax" to be enunciated as a revealed truth by a person of the greatest goodness and wisdom, and he says, I cannot see that any quantity of goodness, wisdom and veracity would afford the slightest reason for believing this. This seems to me only to show that nothing short of the divine veracity can be sufficient ground for faith. I will repeat an illustration I gave above. "If our Lord spoke to me in Syro-Chaldaic, of which I understand nothing, I could say, 'Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius,' but I could not assent to the proposition, because nothing intelligible has been offered for my intellect to assent to." Mr S—— dwells upon the goodness and wisdom of his supposed instructor. But he evidently does not absolutely trust his wisdom. He must begin with that before he can expect to have faith. "I really do not see," he says, "how I can believe what I do not understand." But he knows that many things are true which he cannot understand; why deny that any wisdom or power can possibly tell him one of those many things without giving him to understand it? Surely this is intellectual self-denial verging on despotic cruelty, or it is the suicide of intellectual pride that declines being told any—because it is not told all—the truth.

Mr S—— takes some pains with this illustra-

tion of a meaningless revelation "Conx Ompax," and makes its credibility more offensively preposterous by supposing it to be enforced by a threat of terrible suffering after death for those who refuse to believe. In contrast to this he supposes an eminent surgeon to say, "Unless you have both your legs amputated, you will die in a few days." In this case, he says, you are a weak coward if you don't submit. Again he supposes a man amongst a number of shipwrecked persons in a boat at sea to announce to his companions that he must die in a day or two of disease, and unless thrown overboard at once will infect all the rest. In this case Mr S—— would have no scruple in taking the generous advice of his invalid brother and pitching him overboard. He would accept the revelation of the surgeon and the dying comrade because he could "understand the method by which the intelligible result was said to have been obtained." Mr S—— now draws his remarks to a close, and lest we should have been unnerved by the horrors of mystery which he has so daringly exposed, he reassures us by telling us that theological mysteries are not presented in the threatening form of "Conx Ompax" or they would have been rejected at once, but that they are vivid statements which excite devotional feelings in the highest degree and the belief in which affords satisfaction to numbers of people who wish to have some ideal object of love and devotion. "The difficulties," he says, "are discovered by degrees, as attempts are made to reconcile these statements with others referring to cognate subjects. These difficulties are met by carefully constructed propositions devised to defend the original statement, and such propositions are alleged

to be mysteries. Theological mysteries," he continues, "are thus in many cases in the nature of explanations, and were by no means regarded by those who devised them as propositions conveying incompatible notions."

So far as there is a truth conveyed in this parting sneer, Cardinal Newman has already acknowledged and explained how that mystery does not really attach to the truths themselves, for truth must ever be consistent with itself, but is a symptom that our apprehension of those truths was, from the beginning, imperfect, and therefore resulted in a sort of intellectual mirage which we call mystery.

Even if there were no punishment in store for persistent unbelievers, would it not be better to gain admittance into that vast world of moral and religious truth which our minds can only partially embrace and our words only imperfectly express at the expense of being called the dupes of stubborn blunderers, rather than be imprisoned within the narrow range of our bodily senses with the conceited satisfaction of thinking that we understand all that we profess to know?

And now that I have tried to answer each objection in particular of Mr S—— as to the possibility of believing in mysteries, I will make some remarks about his paper in general. And first, is it the expression of a genuine difficulty or is it special pleading? Every one must sympathize with honest difficulty, nor would it be surprising that even a man of Mr S——'s ability should find difficulty in such a subject; but the tone of bonafide difficulty, however firm, is naturally unassuming. Mr S—— does not seem to admit that there is any difficulty. The majority of civilized

men for eighteen centuries have declared their assent to mysteries and their belief that Heaven and Hell was at stake on their doing so, and a considerable number have sealed their assent with their life-blood; yet Mr S—— can afford to tell Cardinal Newman that, because he is trying to point out how assent to mystery is possible, he does not know what nonsense is, and mistakes words for ideas. All this is discouraging to one who wishes to give an honest difficulty a patient answer. But there is an impression which gradually forces itself upon the mind while studying his paper, and which, if well founded, pleads somewhat in his excuse, that Mr S—— is writing under the influence of intellectual fear. Not that fear makes him write, but that his intellectual powers are partially paralysed by a fear of which the haughty tone and off-hand manner are but a poor disguise. What else will account for a man of his acute mind making such simple blunders? At one time dropping his thesis altogether and drawing a conclusion that tallies with that of his opponent, at another time exhibiting as an illustration of his opponent's error what exactly fulfils his own conditions for assent.

In this way Mr S—— gives a striking testimony that the Rationalist is sometimes more afraid of the Christian than the Christian of the Rationalist. One might have thought that the precious treasure of revealed truth would unnerve the traveller, and that the bandit who had nothing to lose would be fearless, but the fact is that responsibility and trust strengthen the heart while outlawry weighs it down.

Another remarkable fact shown in this paper is that the Rationalist, it may be unconsciously,

but certainly and quietly, drifts into pagan morality. Christianity has always allowed the right of society to deprive the individual of life in punishment for crime—that is, for the moral good and eternal interest of the community—but has never sanctioned the pagan custom of putting individuals to death for the mere temporal interest of the community, as, for example, the destroying all maimed or deformed children lest they should perpetuate this defect in their descendants. Christian instinct revolts even against Euthanasia, which wears such a specious guise of charity. But Mr S—— exclaims, “Who would hesitate to drown his brother, if he is dying of an infectious disease and cannot be removed to a sufficient distance?”

By their fruits you shall know them. Such morality would soon give us an effectual cure for epidemics, and may become worth considering when Rationalists have proved that there is no God. When Mr S—— says, “I do not see how I can believe what I do not understand,” he must mean that to believe without understanding fully the thing believed is either irrational or absolutely impossible. We have seen how far he can prove that it is irrational, and that cannot be absolutely impossible which has been done by so many of his fellow men in all ages. And are there no truths which even Mr S—— believes without understanding them? Does he understand how the spirit within him acts upon and governs his body? Or, if he denies the existence of such a spirit, can he explain the unity of his own being with its self-consciousness and conscience judging of right and wrong? If not, then, his understanding and belief are not always co-extensive.

But it is not only in the supposed cause of truth



against error that the Rationalist objects to mysteries, it is also in what he deems the cause of liberty against tyranny. The possession of truth, with the rationalist, is not intellectual freedom but the acquisition of it by a particular method, that of reason. If obtained on mere authority, it is intellectual tyranny still ; somewhat as a radical might say that just laws were not social freedom when made by an absolute monarch, but only when made by a commune. Better no laws, says the communist, than one in which I have no voice. Better live in sin, says the libertine, than be confirmed in virtue by grace. Better live in ignorance, says the rationalist, than assent to truths that are above my understanding.

## VII—The Sacramental Character of Fire

**M**ATERIAL phenomena, says Cardinal Newman, "are both the types and the instruments of real things unseen." And St Paul: "For the visible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and divinity."

In all material creation nothing seems more dominant than fire, if we take it in all its functions of lighting and heating. Nothing is so all-penetrating, so vivifying, and at the same time, so powerful for destruction and apparent annihilation, and therefore, no object in creation, except, perhaps, man himself, has so universally been crowned by idolaters as the god of this world. We should, then, naturally expect that fire would be eloquent to the Christian of the attributes of God.

The sun is the great fire by whose heat and light all vegetable and animal life is fostered and matured. It vivifies and beautifies all nature, and every one feels, even in this unsunny climate, its magnetic influence. Bird and flower seem to worship the sun. They turn towards it, not merely mechanically—as the weathercock in the wind—but they turn to receive and to be filled with warmth and light, that they may live; and the bird, at least, returns an instinctive homage of grateful joy. "The sun, when he appeareth show-

ing forth at his rising an admirable instrument, the work of the Most High. At noon he burneth the earth; who can abide his burning heat, as one keeping a furnace in works of heat? the sun three times as much burneth the mountains; breathing out fiery vapours and shining with his beams he blindeth the eyes." "God hath set his tabernacle in the sun: and he as a bridegroom coming out of his bridechamber, hath rejoiced as a giant to run his way. His going out is from the end of heaven, and his circuit even to the end thereof; and there is no one that can hide himself from his heat." The foot-note to this passage is, "Here God seems to reside, and the magnificence of His works shines forth, insomuch that all nations have offered divine honours to the sun, and even the Manichees adored it, imagining that it was the very body of Jesus Christ." The Book of Wisdom bears testimony to the fascination exercised over the human heart by the sun and other creations of God, where, in its condemnation of idolaters, it says of those who worshipped the works of God in contrast to those who worshipped the works of man, "But yet, as to these they are less to be blamed, for they perhaps err, seeking God, and desirous to find Him." "But then, again, they are not to be pardoned, for by the greatness of the beauty of the creature, the Creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby."

But, besides the sun, there is that mysterious fire beneath our feet, supposed to occupy the entire centre of the earth, which so often reminds us of its presence and awful power in volcanoes and earthquakes. Then there is the electric fire in the atmosphere, so instantaneously destructive of life.

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Thus, we have in fire a twofold power, beneficent and destructive, pervading all things, above, beneath and around—a power for good and for evil, for reward and for punishment.

It is strikingly coincidental with this, that, when fire lends itself to the immediate service of man, under his guidance it is still consistently twofold in character, beneficent and destructive, Kindled on the household hearth it is a very sun, nourishing and fostering social life. And the whole world of mechanical science may be said to live by fire. Nevertheless, it retains its destructive attributes, and we are horror-struck at times with the news of palaces and towns laid in ashes. The collier takes his trusty lamp to guide him through the dark labyrinth of the coal-pit; when, on a sudden, the flame darts from his hand and joins the treacherous fire-damp, and the pit becomes in an instant a vast grave.

Cardinal Newman says, writing on the attributes of God: "Approach the flame, it warms you, and it enlightens you; yet approach not too near, presume not, or it will change its nature. That very element, which is so beautiful to look at, so brilliant in its light, so graceful in its figure, so soft and lambent in its motion, will be found in its essence to be of a keen resistless kind; it tortures, it consumes, it reduces to ashes that of which it was just before the illumination and the life. So is it with the attributes of God."

But it is in the pages of the Bible that fire stands out most remarkably in its double character. God chooses fire as the sign of His gracious acceptance of man's supreme act of worship—sacrifice. But, then, we see fire descending from heaven on the fair cities of the plain, not in love

and mercy, but in anger and punishment, utterly to consume them. God calls Moses, and institutes the merciful covenant of deliverance from the midst of the flames. But flames leap from the gaping earth to devour the self-ordained priests Corah, Dathan and Abiron. Fire comes down from heaven, and consumes the fifty men and their captain sent by Ochozias against the prophet Elias; and the prophet himself is borne up to heaven in a chariot of fire. The prophet Daniel sees the throne of God like a flame of fire, the wheels of it like a burning fire. A swift stream of fire issued from before Him. Yet again; in the Christian dispensation, the same thing is continued. Our Lord speaks of His having come to cast fire upon the earth, and His desire that it should be kindled. But He also speaks of the wicked being cast into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. So that it would seem that fire was the first material creation, and is to be the consumer and purifier of all other material elements.

The prayers of the Church's ritual constantly remind us that the world will be judged by fire, and that fire will then continue the work of Divine retribution for all eternity. Contrast, too, with this the fact that the Holy Ghost chose fire as His external symbol in the fullest and most momentous communication of Himself at Pentecost. Holy Church has set her seal upon the symbolic character of fire, in the solemn blessing of it and kindling from it of the *Lumen Christi* on Holy Saturday.

God has honoured many other material elements, such as water, made, on the one hand, the instrument of the greatest destruction this world



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has yet experienced, the universal deluge, and, on the other hand, made the sign of the most necessary of the Sacraments. Then, what higher dignity could be given to created element than that bestowed on bread—naturally the staff of human life, and supernaturally, in the Holy Eucharist, the chosen sign of the presence of Christ's human nature amongst us as our spiritual food and sacrifice? The comparison is not invidious. Fire does not claim pre-eminence amongst the inanimate servants of God, but it claims to have a very special testimony to give to the attributes of its Creator.

The extremely contrary operations of the fire of Pentecost and of Gehenna are purposely contrasted in order that the symbolic correspondence between them may be drawn out in the sequel. Stress is laid on the double operation of fire throughout, beneficial and destructive in the order of nature, beneficent and penal in the order of grace; culminating in the purely symbolical fire of Pentecost on the one hand, when it represents the Divine Spirit of love Himself, and on the other hand, in the instrumental fire of hell, which typifies, while it executes, the penal justice of the same Divine Spirit, breathing on the reprobate eternal wrath and hatred. "If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I descend into hell, thou art there."

But how can love and hate be two aspects of the same Divine activity? St Thomas, answering the question, Does God love? lays down the principle, *Primus motus voluntatis est amor*, that love is *per se* the complete action of the will. Every other *motus* of the will is *propter aliud*. All other motions of the will necessarily suppose love. Love

is, as it were, the full note or perfect chord of the will. Now God, being essential action, and action being the motion of the will, and the perfect motion of the will being love, it follows that God is love, *Deus charitas est*. The one God who is Father, Son and Holy Ghost is love. The Father's eternal love of the Son and the Son's eternal love of the Father is the Holy Ghost.

Then, to the further question, Does God love all things? St Thomas answers in the affirmative, on the ground that *omnia existentia in quantum sunt bona sunt*. God's will being the existence of all things, and love being the *primus motus* of God's will, all things are loved by God *in quantum sunt*.

The contrast with our created wills brings this out clearly. Our love is elicited from our wills by the good we see in things. With God, the good in things is the result of His love for them; is, in fact, His love for them, *ad extra*. His love creates their good, beginning with their existence. Our love is admiration—worship; God's love is *infundens, creans*. *Nos itaque ista quae fecisti vidimus quia sunt; tu autem quia vides ea sunt*. (Aug. Conf. xiii, 38.)

If, then, God loves all things, the difficulty follows, How can God be said to love the wicked, even the lost? *Odisti omnes qui operantur iniquitatem*. Nothing can be loved and hated at the same time; therefore, it would seem, God does not love all things. St Thomas answers, there is nothing to prevent the same thing being *secundum aliquid* loved, and at the same time *secundum aliquid* hated. God loves sinners, inasmuch as they are *naturae quaedam*, for so they are, and are from Him. So far as they are sinners, *non sunt* and *ab esse deficiunt*, so far they are hated. From all

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which I gather, that this Divine love and hate is, *ex parte Dei*, one and the same act. God has always unchangeably hated sin and sinners in loving Himself: *apud Dominum non est transmutatio, neque vicissitudinis obumbratio*. The change is in the sinner, who by his free-will has assumed that attitude towards God which incurs His hatred, the converse of His love. "Yet understood I not, clearly and without difficulty, the cause of evil. And yet, whatever it were, I perceived it was in such wise to be sought out as should not constrain me to believe the immutable God to be mutable, lest I should become that evil I was seeking out." (Conf. vii, 3.)

When the sun's ray falls upon an object which absorbs all its light, the object appears black. If it reflects all the light, it appears white; if some, it is a colour, according to the number of the pencils of light reflected. Somewhat in the same way, when the love of God falls on the free-will, i.e., when He bestows gifts upon the rational creature, if that free-will reflects none of that love to the honour and glory of the Giver, but absorbs all to its own self-love, that object is black, so to speak, to God; that is, God hates that free-will by an absolute necessity of His Divine nature.

Therefore, I have said, God's hatred is the converse of His love—one and the same act. As, in a semicircle, the concave implies, of necessity, the convex on the opposite side—and exactly in proportion as it is concave on the one side, it must be convex on the other, and *vice versa*—so does the love and hate of God balance; and the one exactly measures the other; nor can one exist without the other, as being one and the same act.

Had sin and hell never existed, God would not

have hated *actualiter*, but *potentialiter* and *implicitè*, as a necessary converse of His love. The sinner has become subject to God's hatred, because, though created and sanctified in the concave, as it were, of God's love, he has deliberately turned himself to the convex of God's love. And this mysterious unity, nay, identity of Divine love and hate, seems to be typified in nature and religion by fire, which God has so often chosen as the instrument and symbol of His love and of His hatred—as the symbol even of His own Divine Spirit, and as the instrument of His eternal hatred. As the sevenfold heated furnace of Nebucodonosor was the destruction of the sinners who were kindling it, and at the same time a refreshing chamber for the three saints, so the Divine Spirit of love is at once the inaccessible light in which the saints participate as their everlasting reward, and the undying hatred that will for ever feed the flames of hell, "the breath of the Lord as a torrent of brimstone kindling it." (Is. xxx, 33.)

"Be not afraid, then, my soul," says Blessed Father Southwell, in his *Meditations on the Love of God*, "for that this chariot of Elias is of fire, which is thy holy and burning love, which taketh the souls by force and carrieth them up into heaven, seeing the children of Babylon were not afraid of it, but entered boldly into this fire, and their bonds being burned and they let loose and at liberty went singing and praising God in all His creatures. This fire of holy love burneth not, but shineth and giveth light. It burneth and burneth not, for it burneth the bonds, wasteth the cords, consumeth tribulations, and taketh away the chains of sins; but it burneth not so much as

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the hairs of the head of the children, which are made innocent and clean in the burning flames of the pure love of our Saviour and merciful Jesus. Whereat (as another Nebucodonosor) our enemy, the devil, doth very much marvel. Such is the power and force of the divine fire of love, that, purging the sensuality, maketh it spiritual, and lifteth it up to take pleasure in Thee, O Lord." (Med. xxv.)

This may help to explain how pain and sorrow in this world are the action of God's love shining on imperfect fallen nature and purifying it, and therefore by a holy instinct always joyfully welcomed by the saints. This, too, may help to explain how it is that the fire of hell is said to be the same as that of purgatory. Both represent God's love: acting in purgatory, on souls not wholly dead, and therefore purifying and finite in its action; and acting in hell on souls utterly reprobate, and therefore penal only and eternal. The mission of fire is, then, to witness to the unity and even identity of the Divine action in loving and hating. Not that loving and hating can be synonymous, but that in God they are the inseparable converse of each other. That loving and hating, and so rewarding and punishing, are the *actus purus aeternus et simplex*, which is God. "Deus inquam, qui es quidquid in te est: tu es enim ipsa sapientia tua; bonitas tua; potentia tua; et summa felicitas tua" (Savonarola, in Ps. c.) To witness that there is in God no sudden, uncontrollable passion of revenge, but a dire necessity in the perfect oneness of His own nature, which is infinite love; that as He rewards eternally, He must also punish eternally. "Ira Dei non perturbatio animi ejus est, sed judicium quo



irrogatur poena peccato. Cogitatio vero ejus et recogitatio mutandarum rerum est immutabilis ratio." (*Civ. Dei*, xv, 25.)

Intellectual difficulties, arising from the impotence of the mind to imagine adequately what is due to the infinite perfection of God, must always remain. But to allow such difficulties to undermine faith is to be guilty not only of the moral crime of infidelity, but also, unconsciously, to yield to the mental weakness of surrendering reason to the dominion of imagination. For in the mysteries of faith mere reason would support the mind further than imagination. We cannot imagine a creature so wicked as to deserve eternal punishment; but our reason—taking reason in its broad sense, not merely as the argumentative faculty, but as the illative sense or rational instinct as well—will show us that eternal punishment is due to the rejection of infinite love. Our imagination makes it appear that to perpetuate the punishment of the sinner is to perpetuate, in some degree, also his sin. But reason tells us that punishment which is purely penal no more perpetuates sin than that which is expiatory. The state of aversion to God is the sinner's infliction upon himself. There is no additional rebellion of the free-will against God, because He abandons it to a reprobate sense in testimony of His infinite justice, rather than condones it in honour of His infinite mercy. The origin of evil was what St Augustine found to be such a difficulty. That the state of aversion to infinite goodness should ever begin, is a mystery. But, having begun, it is also a mystery that infinite justice should be so infinitely merciful as to change that state in any single case back again to a state of love.

Before the thought of eternity—whether of reward or punishment—the imagination fails where reason only bows. Reason feels the necessity and truth of that which it cannot comprehend. Imagination faints away before that which it cannot portray. We live in an age that prides itself on its fidelity to reason; but those who in defence of reason surrender the mysteries of faith, in reality degrade reason to the weak and capricious tyranny of the imagination, which like another Dalila induces it to betray the secret of its supernatural strength, divine faith. Such is the mental condition of those who protest against eternal punishment in the name of infinite love. They are daring to limit the requirements of divine love to the minute span of their own imagination, for it is precisely divine love that demands eternal punishment as the necessary converse of eternal reward. They “change the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man.” As those who refused the mysterious imprisonment in the ark had no natural power to save themselves from the deluge, so those who refuse the mysteries of faith do not escape from mysteries unless they give up thinking altogether. Their natural powers are quite inadequate to solve the myriad mysteries of nature. God, religion, conscience, the Church, the Bible, have become to them more insoluble mysteries than ever, now that their own account of themselves has been rejected.

The uncontroversial *argumentum congruentiæ*, or, as we may say, fitness, is one which acts quietly but forcibly upon “the hidden springs of thought,” in spite of the scorn of formal logic. It is uncongenial to the materialistic temperament

of the day, and therefore, perhaps, all the more wholesome. Such is the character of the argument suggested by fire—fire, so great and powerful—when we think of this world as one vast furnace, on the egg-shell crust of which we breathe a moment and then leave our dust; or again, when we think of those countless still larger balls of fire which burn in the firmament above us, apparently the source of every form of life, and at the same time, so tender and beautiful as the light which rejoiceth the eye, and decks the world in such an inimitable variety of colour, that we doubt its identity with burning fire until we concentrate its rays, and behold flames are kindled. Such, too, is the contrast and unity between the love and hate of God—the all-pervading, all-penetrating tenderness and richness of His love, and the terrifying, withering, hopelessly irresistible strength of His hatred. Can such extremes meet? Can they be the same act? Yes, they are identical in God; they are God. “O Truth who art Eternity, and Love who art Truth, and Eternity who art Love, Thou art my God!” (Conf. Aug. vii, 10.)

## VIII—The Nature of Pure Love

“**I**T is of the greatest importance that a Confessor should have a true and clear idea of what charity or perfect love is, from which comes, as an immediate result, perfect contrition, which justifies the soul before the actual reception of absolution. Father Ballerini says, ‘St Augustine explains, in many places, what is meant by loving God *gratis* and *propter seipsum*, viz., that we should not serve God nor even love or seek Him *propter aliud*, that is, for a temporal reward—for a reward *extra ipsum*, outside Him, for the sake of good things, distinct and different from Him; but that He should be our good, our happiness, our reward.’

“It is clear that God ought to be loved as He is and not in a one-sided way, and, so to speak, regarded from one side rather than the other. While God is the ‘Summum Bonum *in se*,’ He is also *our* ‘Summum Bonum,’ our end, our happiness, our all. If then we ought to love Him as He is, it is not sufficient to love Him as He is *in se*, but we ought also to love Him as *our own* ‘Summum Bonum.’ So that those are in error who maintain that the love of God, to be perfect, should exclude every motive concerning our own well-being, including eternal happiness, which is to possess Him eternally.

“Nor should we take any notice of the enthusiastic expressions of pious souls, which appear to imply the opposite; because true and solid doc-

trine on Christian virtue we must draw from the Holy Scriptures, the Fathers and the definitions of the Church, and not from the impetuosity of a soul beside itself with love (*non dagli impeti di un cuore inamato*), which often, when unable to express what it wishes, says more than it intends.

"The highest appreciative love is that which, as St Bonaventure says, 'Deum concupiscit super omnia,' and so runs to Him as its highest good. Indeed, St Thomas says that if God were not regarded by man as his own '*Summum Bonum*,' man could not have for God the love of friendship; . . . and would not a friend be ridiculously stupid who, in order to love his friend better, should wish to love him, abstracting, renouncing all the benefits of friendship, including those of meeting, conversation and consolation? 'Che stupida amicizia serrebbe questa!'"\*

In the clear light of this short exposition by Frassinetti, it will be interesting to examine the passage on "Charity" from a Manual of Instruction well known and in high esteem for popular use. The Manual says: "By it (i.e., charity) we love God above all things for His own sake. Its object is God, considered as supremely good, infinitely lovable in Himself. We may love a person," continues the Manual, "for two reasons, either because we appreciate his excellence in himself, or because we have received, or expect to receive, some advantage from him. So we may love God, either because, when we think of His perfections, we perceive that He is, beyond all other beings, worthy of love; or we may love Him for what He has done or may do for us—because He has created us, redeemed us, sanctified us,

\* Extract from Frassinetti's *Compendium of Moral Theology*.



bestowed on us countless blessings, temporal and spiritual; because in Him alone is our happiness, and without Him we must be eternally miserable. When we love God in the former manner, we are said to love Him with the love of benevolence or friendship; when in the latter, with the love of concupiscence or gratitude."

Here then we have as flat a contradiction to all that Frassinetti tried to impress upon us as can be imagined. The Manual says, in effect, there are two kinds of love of God—the love of Him as the "*Summum Bonum in se*," and the love of Him as our "*Summum Bonum*." The first is the love of benevolence or friendship; the second is the love of concupiscence. Frassinetti says that the love of benevolence or friendship, perfect charity, is not only to love God as the "*Summum Bonum in se*," but also as our own "*Summum Bonum*," because we must love Him as He is, and He is our "*Summum Bonum*," and therefore perfection includes loving Him as such.

The Manual, having told us that the love of friendship is solely the love of God as "*Summum Bonum in se*," continues, "The love of benevolence or friendship alone is the love of charity," thus cutting off from the repentant sinner all those roots of perfect contrition which draw their nourishment from the consideration of God as our "*Summum Bonum*" in the past, present and future. The Manual continues, "The love of concupiscence and gratitude belong rather to hope." How can this be? Surely there is gratitude in heaven, but there is no longer hope. Can anyone conceive the Blessed Virgin or the highest seraphs loving God without gratitude? Yet gratitude is to be called the love of concupiscence just because

it is an exercise of the love of God as our own "Summum Bonum." The fact is, gratitude belongs to the essence of the highest love of the creature for the Creator. St Thomas says, "Amor non dividitur per amicitiam et concupiscentiam, sed per amorem amicitiae et concupiscentiae." Why? Because love is the thing which is qualified by friendship or by concupiscence. These are very different qualifications. What is meant by friendship? I should say self-sacrifice, self-exchange, or self-communication. And what by concupiscence? I should say love of self. This, then, is the difference. Friendship is a genuine qualification of love; concupiscence is an adulteration, a dilution of love. You object that self cannot be excluded from even the love of friendship. True; in perfect friendship love requires self as the willing victim to be immolated or exchanged; in the love of concupiscence the friend is required as the victim to be immolated to self. The gift, the profit, is the measure of the love of concupiscence. It is a muddy reflection of true love, and only tolerated as the initiative of the love of friendship. When, says Lessius, the gifts of God are regarded as *relative attributes* of God—*ut Divina pertinentia*—they are the motive of the love of friendship.

The point to observe is, where does the soul rest? Does it rest in the Creator or in the Creature—in the gift or in the Giver? If the soul rises from the gift to the Giver, it is gratitude; if it descends from the Giver to the gift, it is mere love of concupiscence. The sucking infant loves its mother merely for the warmth and milk its mother gives; after a time it becomes grateful to its mother and its love rises from the gift to the mother and rests there. The first is the love of concupiscence, for

the love rests in the gift. The second is the love of gratitude or benevolence, which rests in the giver.

The author of the *Imitation* puts among the effects of Divine Love, "He looks not at the gifts, but turns himself to the Giver above all good." This is not intended to express a love without gratitude, but rather the very perfection of gratitude. Love is the appetite for or gravitation to good. In God this is His love for Himself, the essential action from all eternity of the Divine Will, which *ab intra* is the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, and *ad extra* is the universe of angels, men and things. Not that creation is a form of God, but that God's love of Himself is the ultimate and adequate account of their being. In creatures love is merely sensitive, as in the brutes, or sensitive and intellectual or merely intellectual, as in men. The origin of each individual and the propagation of the human race is the unitive operation of love sensitive and intellectual. Love is the principal likeness to Himself which God has produced in creatures. God's love of His creatures is an emanation of His love of Himself, and, mysterious to say, though it is the most perfect, generous and self-sacrificing and long-suffering love, it is the love of Himself, because His creatures are so absolutely His own, and bound up with His honour and glory. So with the image of God's love in creatures; their love of self and of neighbour is intended to be one with their love of God, and they are so constituted that the more perfect their love of God, the more perfect will really prove to be their love of self and neighbour. Nevertheless, it is only fair to the Manual to say that Alban Butler, in his most in-

teresting note to the Life of St John of the Cross about quietism and semiquietism, makes precisely the same distinction as the Manual between the love of concupiscence and benevolence and almost in the same words.

St Gregory says, "Nemo proprie ad semetipsum habere charitatem esse possit." True! Our love of self must lead to another, even to God, if it is to be worthy of the name of love, even the love of self. The familiar line of Tennyson seems to express it, that even self-love must not rest in self, but rebound to another: "Love took up the harp of life and smote on all the cords, with might; smote the cord of self, that trembling passed with music out of sight." We have been given two sacraments of love—one the sacrament of earthly human love, comprising sensitive, intellectual and spiritual love, in accordance with man's complex nature; and the other, the sacrament of heavenly love, all spiritual love. In both, we see love as the *virtus unitiva*. We can distinguish the element of self in both, but it is self-sacrificed for another—exchanged. One is the earthly image of the other; one is temporal and the other eternal—Matrimony and the Holy Eucharist.

As our being is a spiritual and material compound, and our state a transitional and probationary one, love is involved in many complexities. Gravitation to the connatural by being inordinately sensitive degenerates into sensuality, whose only claim to the name of love is that of Satan to the name of angel—a *corruptio optimi*. Then, too, love becomes complicated with anger and hatred, as in the typical crusader love of the holy places expressed itself in hatred of the infidel. "Omnes passionēs ex amore causantur;

amor inhians habere quod amatur, cupiditas est, id autem habens eoque fruens, lætitia est. Amor ergo est prima passionum concupiscibilis."\* And St Thomas: "Quatuor nomina inveniuntur ad idem quodam modo pertinentia, scilicet, *amor, dilectio, charitas, et amicitia*: differunt tamen in hoc, quod amicitia est quasi habitus. Amor autem et dilectio significantur per modum actus vel passionis; charitas autem utroque modo accipi potest." "Amor non dividitur per amicitiam et concupiscentiam, sed per amorem amicitiae et concupiscentiae." "Viris corporalis est principium amoris sensitivi, et similiter contemplatio spiritualis pulchritudinis vel bonitatis est principium amoris spiritualis."

Kenelm Digby quotes St Gregory as saying: "God is not holy in the manner that we ought to be; and holiness in Him is not what it ought to be in us; for in us holiness is inseparable from penitence."

So love in creatures, however perfect, can never be what it is in God, because it must be inseparable from gratitude. You might say that if you assert that two things are inseparable, you imply that they are distinguishable. True, ideally distinguishable but not really separable. Take away gratitude from the creature and *ipso facto* love is extinguished—is inconceivable. Therefore Butler, in his sermon on the love of God, defines it, "All those affections which are due to Him from such a creature as man, and which rests in Him as their end." If you object that the same could be said of hope in this life, that it is inseparable from love, I should admit that hope is love *in via*—a yearning for union. So all the virtues are phases

\* De Civ. Dei.



or sections of love. Love is the unit, and they are the fractions. However, let us now turn to those who have made pure love the end and aim of their lives—the contemplatives. First, the theory from Lessius; second, the practice from St Theresa.

Lessius *De Summo Bono*: "There are three ways in which God can be united to our soul.

"1. By the union of *Dependence*, by which our souls and all creatures depend upon God, as light depends upon the sun, so everything in the universe is held together and connected and receives its being, species, beauty and all its force from God. So that if anything could intervene between and cut off the creature from its Creator, it would melt into its original nothing. In this way, even the demons in hell are united to God.

"2. The second way is by close intimate penetration or presence.

"3. By faith, hope and charity.

"Besides these, there is one much more sublime, that of transformation into our first beginning, transition in *ideam a qua profluximus*. For some contemplatives teach that our happiness consists in this, that we should altogether leave our created existence and pass into our uncreated and supernatural existence, where we are one with God, one essence, one life, one light, one happiness, one spirit. This might mean first that *secundum rem* our created being ceased to be created, and is changed into uncreated being. This was the heresy laid to the charge of John Rusbrochius by Gerson, but not fairly, as Denis the Carthusian shows. The other way is that the created being ceases not *secundum rem*, but only *quoad sensum et effectum contemplantis*; which is so rapt in God as no longer to feel itself, but only God, into whom

it seems to be absorbed. This is called *unionem fruitivam*: fruition, in which the soul possesses and enjoys God, forgetful of itself, feeling and tasting His sweetness with indescribable feeling of delight to such a degree as to seem transformed into God. This is the way Rusbrochius, Denis the Carthusian and others understand this opinion. But for this union only sight and love are necessary. This kind of union is midway between the union of the saints in glory—beatific vision—and the ordinary union in this life by faith, hope and charity. For it is not produced by our own act with ordinary helps, but by a most special influence from God, by which these acts are excited and formed in the devout soul, while the soul itself remains passive, i.e., not freely co-operating (although it virtually concurs). By these acts God is able to show the soul whatsoever he wishes, producing in the intellect conceptions of wonderful things, intense light, immense solitude, incomprehensible beauty, heavenly glory and other stupendous things which are shown to saints in their ecstatic contemplations. And at the same time in one soul can be excited the most burning acts of love, joy, delight and a kind of touch and taste of divine pleasure and sweetness, and so far even of divinity; even a feeling of a kind of annihilation and absorption into the beloved, or into the first beginning, or immersion into the ocean of delights, the action of the inferior lower feelings meantime ceasing, and the free use of the imagination, intellect and will. Many of God's friends have often experienced such things with the greatest advance in the knowledge and love of God and contempt of self as a consequence of these visitations. In this state the visions of the pro-

phets and the Apocalypse were received. Therefore we ought not to condemn mystical writers even though they describe what we have never experienced, because since many of them have been very holy men and gifted with every virtue, they were not likely to be easily deceived, and as a rule everything they describe can be easily explained."

"What is love in contemplatives?"

"Love is the first and predominant act of the will, which God excites in the minds of contemplatives, from which flow other motions of the holy will as from a fountain. This love is a supernatural impetus which God impresses by contemplation in wonderful ways upon the will. As the magnet imparts an impetus to the iron, by which it is attracted to the magnet and closely joins itself to the magnet, so God, seen by that light of contemplation, confers a kind of impetus to the soul, by which she is powerfully drawn to Him. What attraction and weight are to bodies, that is love to spirits. The love of God, then, is the weight and attraction suited to a spirit, by which it is brought to rest in God as its eternal centre. 'Everything,' says St Augustine, 'has, as it were, an appetite for its own place and order.' For the momenta of weights are, as it were, the loves of bodies, whether they tend downwards by heaviness or upwards by lightness. For the body is carried by weight, as the soul by love, wherever it goes. In like manner love is analogous to heat, as sight and intelligence to light. For as sight and everything understood is a kind of spiritual light, so love is spiritual heat. And as corporal light engenders bodily heat, by which bodies are warmed, so spiritual light—that is, the recognition of good—produces spiritual heat by which the soul is enkindled.

“*Ecstasy*. St Denis mentions several effects or properties of Divine Love. Ecstasy is one. Love produces ecstasy, not allowing the lovers to have command of themselves, but transferring each entirely to the power of the other. There are two ways in which this may be produced. First, when thoughts and affections are so completely transferred to the beloved that the soul forgets itself and its own affairs. Then the soul has, as it were, gone out of itself in thought and affection, and it does not seem to live in its own body, but in the beloved himself. Thus St Paul declares, *Vivo ego, jam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus*. So Christ Himself is said by St Denis to have been in a sort of ecstasy of love in the work of Redemption. The other way in which ecstasy is experienced is rather physical weakness and may exist without love—the partial or total cessation of the vital functions, because the higher faculties are so absorbed in contemplation.”

There is nothing in this exposition by Lessius of the extraordinary effects of love, which seems inconsistent with the nature of love, when we remember that love is the *virtus unitiva*. The whole economy of Redemption and our Lord's words, “Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friend,” suggests that marvellous effect of love which has been called self-annihilation, which can only be really a very high degree of union. Union of wills is not possession, in the way the evil spirits seized upon souls, but a communion, the effect pledged by Christ to receiving the Holy Eucharist—“abideth in me and I in Him.” Nevertheless, we are haunted by the shadow of false mysticism. Where is the line to be drawn between true and false mysticism?

St Theresa's account of her own raptures or ecstasy may throw some light on this question.

"And when we are giving Him thanks for this great mercy, drawing near to Him in earnest, with all our might, then it is our Lord draws up the soul, as the clouds, so to speak, gather the mists from the face of the earth, and carries it away out of itself. I have heard it said that the clouds, or the sun, draw the mists together, and as a cloud rising up to heaven, He takes the soul with Him, and begins to show it the treasures of the kingdom which He has prepared for it. I know not whether the comparison be accurate or not; but the fact is, that is the way in which it is brought about. During rapture the soul does not seem to animate the body, the natural heat of which is perceptibly lessened; the coldness is increased, though accompanied with exceeding joy and sweetness. A rapture is absolutely irresistible; while union, inasmuch as we are then on our own ground, may be hindered; though that resistance be painful and violent, it is, however, almost always possible. But rapture for the most part is irresistible. It comes, in general, as a shock, quick and sharp, before you can collect your thoughts, or help yourself in any way, and you see and feel it as a cloud, or a strong eagle rising upwards and carrying you away on its wings. I repeat it, you feel and see yourself carried away, you know not whither. For, though we feel how delicious it is, yet the weakness of our nature makes us afraid at first, and we require a much more resolute and courageous spirit than in the previous states in order to risk everything, come what may, and to abandon ourselves into the hand of God, and go willingly whither we are carried, seeing that we



must be carried away, however painful it may be. And so trying is it, that I would very often resist and exert all my strength, particularly at those times when the rapture was coming on me in public. I did so, too, very often when I was alone, because I was afraid of delusions. Occasionally I was able, by great efforts, to make a slight resistance, but afterwards I was worn out, like a person who had been contending with a strong giant; at other times it was impossible to resist at all; my soul was carried away, and almost always my head with it. I had no power over it, and now and then, the whole body as well, so that it was lifted up from the ground. This has not happened to me often; once, however, it took place when we were altogether in choir and I on my knees, on the point of communicating. It was a very sore distress to me; for I thought it a most extraordinary thing, and was afraid it would occasion much talk; so I commanded the nuns—for it happened after I was made Prioress—never to speak of it. But, at other times, the moment I felt that our Lord was about to repeat the act, and once in particular during a sermon—it was the feast of our House, some great ladies being present—I threw myself on the ground; then the nuns came round me to hold me; but still the rapture was observed. I made many supplications to our Lord that He would be pleased to give me no more of those graces which were outwardly visible; for I was weary of living under such great restraint, and because His Majesty could not bestow such graces on me without their becoming known. It seems that of His goodness He has been pleased to hear my prayer, for I have never been enraptured since. It is true it was not long ago. It

seemed to me when I tried to make some resistance, as if a great force beneath my feet lifted me up. I know of nothing to which to compare it; but it was much more violent than the other spiritual visitations, and I was, therefore, as one ground to pieces. For it is a great struggle and, in short, of little use whenever the Lord so wills it. There is no power against His power.

“The effects of rapture are great: one is that the mighty power of the Lord is manifested; and, as we are not strong enough, when His Majesty wills it, to control either soul or body, so, neither have we any power over it, but whether we like it or not, we see that there is one mightier than we are, that these graces are His gifts, and that of ourselves we can do nothing whatever, and humility is deeply imprinted in us. Further, I confess that it threw me into great fear, very great indeed, at first, for when I saw my body thus lifted up from the earth, how could I help it? through the spirit that draws it upwards after itself, and that with great sweetness, if unresisted. The senses are not lost; at least I was so much myself as to be able to see that I was being lifted up. The Majesty of Him who can effect this so manifests itself that the hairs of my head stand upright, and a great fear comes upon me of offending God, who is so mighty. This fear is bound up in exceeding great love, which is acquired anew, and directed to Him who we see bears so great a love to a worm so vile and who seems not to be satisfied with attracting the soul to Himself in so real a way, but will have the body also, though it be mortal and of earth so foul, such as it is, through our sins which are so great.

“Rapture leaves behind a strange detach-

ment also, which I shall never be able to describe."

Physical effects of raptures: "When the rapture was over, my body seemed frequently to be buoyant, as if all weight had departed from it; so much so, that now and then I scarcely knew that my feet touched the ground. But during the rapture itself the body is very often as if it were dead, perfectly powerless. It continues in the position it was in when the rapture came upon it; if sitting, sitting; if the hands were open, or if they were shut, they will be open or shut. For though the senses fail but rarely, it has happened to me occasionally to lose them wholly. Seldom, however, and then only for a short time. But, in general, they are in disorder; and though they have no power whatever to deal with outward things, there remains the power of hearing and seeing, but it is as if the things heard and seen were at a great distance, far away. I do not say that the soul sees and hears when the rapture is at the highest. I mean by 'at the highest' when the faculties are lost, because profoundly united with God, for then it neither sees, nor hears, nor perceives, as I believe; but, as I said of the previous prayer of union, this utter transformation of the soul in God continues only for an instant; yet while it continues, no faculty of the soul is aware of it, or knows what is passing there. Nor can it be understood while we are living on the earth, at least God will not have us understand it. I know it by experience. . . . I dwell so long on this point, because I know that there are persons now, even in this place, to whom our Lord is granting these graces, and if their directors have had no experience in the matter, they will think, perhaps, that they must

be as dead persons during the trance, and they will think so the more if they have no learning. It is piteous to see what those confessors who do not understand this make people suffer. I shall speak of it by and by. Perhaps I do not know what I am saying. You, my Father, will understand it, if I am at all correct; for our Lord has admitted you to the experience of it; yet, because that experience is not very great, it may be, perhaps, that you have not considered the matter so much as I have done."

A short extract will be here reassuring, from Blessed John Avila's very discriminating censure of St Theresa's account of herself.

"The doctrine of prayer is for the most part sound, and you may rely on it, and observe it, and the raptures I find to possess the tests of those which are true. What you say of God's way of teaching the soul, without respect to the imagination and without interior locutions, is safe, and I find nothing to object to it. St Augustine speaks well of it. Interior locutions in these days have been a delusion to many, and exterior locutions are at least safe. It is easy enough to see when they proceed from ourselves, but to distinguish between those of a good and those of an evil spirit is more difficult. There are many rules given for finding out whether they come from our Lord or not, and one of them is that they should be sent us in a time of need or for some good end, as for the comforting a man under temptation or in doubt, or as a warning of coming danger. As a good man will not speak unadvisedly, neither will God; so considering this, and that the locutions are agreeable to the holy writings and the teaching of the Church, my opinion is that the

locations mentioned in the book come from God.

“Nor should anyone cause alarm by condemning them forthwith, because he sees that the person to whom they are granted is not perfect; for it is nothing new that our Lord in His goodness makes wicked people just, yea, even grievous sinners, by giving them to taste most deeply of His sweetness. I have seen it so myself. Who will set bounds to the goodness of our Lord? especially when these graces are given, not for merit, nor because one is stronger; on the contrary, they are given to one because he is weaker; and as they do not make one more holy, they are not always given to the most holy.

“They are unreasonable who disbelieve these things merely because they are most high things, and because it seems to them incredible that Infinite Majesty humbles Himself to these loving relations with one of His creatures. It is written ‘God is love,’ and if He is love, then infinite love and infinite goodness, and we must not be surprised if such a love and such a goodness breaks out into such excesses of love as disturb those who know nothing of it. And though many know of it by faith, still, as to that special experience of the loving and more than loving converse of God with whom He will, if not had, how deep it reaches can never be known. And so I have seen many persons scandalized at hearing what God in His love does for His creatures. As they themselves are very far away from it, they cannot think that God will do for others what He is not doing for them. As this is an effect of love, and that a love which causes wonder, reason requires we should look upon it as a sign of its being from God, seeing



that He is wonderful in His works, and most especially in those of His compassion.

“It should be considered that, even if they do come from God, Satan may mix with them suggestions of his own; you should therefore be always suspicious of them. Men must not rest much on them, seeing that holiness (also when they are known to be from God) does not lie in them, but in a humble love of God and our neighbour; everything else, however good, must be feared, and our efforts directed to the gaining of humility, and goodness, and the love of our Lord. It is seemly, also, not to worship what is seen in these visions, but only Jesus Christ, either as in heaven or in the Sacrament, or, if it be a vision of the saints, then to lift up the heart to the Holy One in heaven, and not to that which is presented to the imagination. I say, too, that the things mentioned in this book befall other persons, even in this our day, and that there is great certainty that they come from God, whose arm is not shortened that He cannot do now what He did in times past, and that in weak vessels for His own glory. Go on your road, but always suspecting robbers, and asking for the right way; give thanks to our Lord, who has given you His Love, the knowledge of yourself, and a love of penance and the Cross, making no account of these other things. However, do not despise them either, for there are signs that most of them come from our Lord, and those that do not come from Him will not hurt you if you ask for direction.”

From these extracts I gather that the wonderful phenomena, raptures, ecstasy and locutions, etc., are to be regarded as evidences directly of the love of God for His creatures, and only in-

directly as evidence of the love of the creature for God. The measure of the creature's love still remains the same, namely, obedience—the union, in other words, of the creature's will with the Will of the Creator. "If you love Me, keep My commandments."

Still the question remains unanswered. Where is the line between the true and false mystics? I will quote a paragraph from Father Baker's chapter on "The Prayer of Interior Silence" in the *Sancta Sophia*.

"Now, though no distinct reflecting or otherwise express acts either of the understanding or the will are admitted into this exercise, yet the soul is far from that mere cessation or non-actuation professed by the frantic illuminates; for here the soul is in a case like to a tender mother with unspeakable satisfaction regarding her most amiable child; she all the while says nothing, neither thinks any express distinct thought of which she can give any account, yet both her mind and will also are busy. Yea, the mind in one single regard has the virtue of many long discourses, and the will in one quiet continued application has the quintessence of a thousand distinct affections. In like manner a soul does actually regard God, and being in His presence she does really with adoration, humility, resignation and love behave herself towards Him; and what need is there that she should tell Him that she does acknowledge His Presence, or that she does adore, love and resign herself to Him? She rather chooses the psalmist's way of praising and serving God, who saith, 'Domine, tibi silentium laus est—Silence is praise to Thee, O Lord,' and indeed the most effectual, becoming praise of all other it is, pro-

ceeding out of a deep sense of His incomprehensible perfection and majesty whom the Seraphim contemplate by covering their faces and glorify most perfectly in that profound and awful half-hour's silence mentioned in the Apocalypse."

Father Baker likens this prayer of interior silence to the behaviour of a faithful servant who, entering into the presence of his master, begins by word and gesture to offer his respects, but then remains silent in reverent attention to the will of his master. Again, he likens it to a large bird high in the air which at first flaps its wings, but then sails quietly and smoothly on without any observable motion of the wing. And this comes very much to that which we should tell a first communicant; that at the very time of communicating he need not, and perhaps had better not, be actually saying any prayer, but rather trying quietly to realize the divine presence.

Dr Sweeney takes special exception to the word self-annihilation, because it seems to imply, he says, that a state of pure charity excludes all private interest. And very likely that false principle has been the root which brought forth the poisonous fruit of false mysticism.

Self-annihilation may be indefensible, but the word annihilation is used by St Theresa, not, I think, as the action of self, but as the action of God as synonymous with inebriation and fruition. It seems to mean utter forgetfulness of self and consequent detachment from all things but the will of God; saying, as it were, "Take away all other desires, give me only Thy holy will."

In hoc statu respuit quidquid est terrenum,  
Mundique solatium reputat venenum;  
Sed ad nonam veniens, moritur ad plenum:  
Tuum amoris impetus carnis rumpit frenum.\*

It would be interesting to know what is the difference, if any, between rapture and possession, beyond that one is holy and divine, and therefore not contrary to, though above, human nature, which is made for union with God; while the other is diabolical, and therefore criminal and contrary to nature. Here it may be observed, in passing, that mesmerism and hypnotism seem to be a kind of possession by a fellow being, to whom we ought never to resign the absolute unconditional control of our will; for in the most perfect complete religious obedience the freedom of the will is retained and also the veto of conscience. And it is worth remembering that even when it is a question of rapture by the Divine Spirit Himself, St Theresa and other spiritual guides do not cease warning us never to seek or even desire such wonderful effects.

Dr Sweeney apologizes for Father Baker, and declares that if he had lived to see Molinos condemned he would not have written as he did in praise of Antonio de Rojas, whose work on the Prayer of Union was put on the Index, though Father Baker says it was approved by eminent doctors, bishops and inquisitors. Dr Sweeney says Molinos was condemned for teaching, "Oportet hominem suas potentias annihilare: et hæc est vita æterna." Now this sounds like the heresy which Lessius has told us Gerson charged Rusbrochius with unfairly, the distinction there was between "annihilatio secundum rem" and "quoad sensum

\* Joannis Hovedeni Philomena.

et effectum." How far de Rojas' words will admit of this distinction I cannot say, but Dr Sweeney gives another point less defensible from Molinos, "Velle operari est Deum offendere," condemning active operations in that particular state of prayer as offensive to God. He forbids all meditation on the four last great truths—death, judgement, hell and heaven. He asserts that whoever has given up his free will to God, ought to have no care about anything, neither about hell nor paradise, nor about his own perfection, the acquisition of virtues, nor about his sanctification and salvation; so says Dr Sweeney.

Now it appears to me that such writers as these have in some degree fallen into the impiety of Simon Magus. They are trying to reduce to an art what can only be divinely inspired science. They try, by a sort of self-mesmerism, to obtain possession of the most special and extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit of Divine Love. St Theresa speaks of annihilation, but only as the irresistible effect of the Divine Union. She resisted to her uttermost the loss of her faculties, and would have shrunk with horror at the idea of trying to obtain the union by first producing the effects. The loss of her will is not an abandonment, but a union of her will with the Divine will, in which state it becomes indistinguishable from the Divine Will—a fulfilment of the prayer of our Lord, "That they may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us." This distinction between what I have called the art and the science of mystic love is expressed in the following words of St Bonaventura in the last chapter of the *Intinerarium Mentis ad Deum*: "Tu autem, O Amice, circa mysticas visiones corroborato



itinere et sensus deserere et intellectuales operationes et sensibilia et invisibilia, et omne non ens et ens, et ad unitatem, ut possibile est, inscius restituere ipsius, qui est super omnem essentiam et scientiam. Etenim te ipso et omnibus immensurabili et absoluto puræ mentis excessu, ad super-essentialem divinarum tenebrarum radium, omnia deserens et ab omnibus absolutus ascendes. Si autem quæris, quomodo hæc fiant, interroga gratiam non doctrinam, desiderium non intellectum, gemitum orationis non studium lectionis, sponsum non magistrum, Deum non hominem, caliginem non claritatem, non lucem sed ignem totaliter inflammantem, et in Deum excessivis unctionibus et ardentissimis affectionibus transferentem."

St John of the Cross, in his *Maxims*, says: "The strength of the soul lies in its faculties, passions and desires; if these be directed towards God by the will, and withdrawn from all that is not God, the soul then keeps its strength for Him and loves Him with all its might, as our Lord commands us. The worth of love does not consist in high feelings but in detachment; in patience under trial for the sake of God whom we love. Herein a man may know whether he truly loves God. Is he satisfied with anything less than God?"

After all, how difficult it is to say exactly what love is. We only see its effects. If we say with St Dionysius, quoted by St Alphonsus, "Love is the union of wills," or with St Thomas, *Recta voluntas est amor bonus, perversa voluntas est malus amor*, these are only principal effects. If we say love is a spiritual heat or fire enkindling, that again is only an effect. At last we rest content with the words of the beloved Disciple, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Charity."

God then is Love, and the creature's love is communion, Holy Communion, with God.

Nec lingua valet dicere,  
Nec litera exprimere :  
Expertus potest credere  
Quid sit Jesum diligere.

A paradox most nearly expresses what love is: Love is the sublimest self-love identical with the sublimest self-sacrifice. "Only the saints can understand what they in Jesus prove."

One short passage, in conclusion, from those beautiful sermons, "The Shadows of the Rood," written by one who must once have tasted the true love of God, but who afterwards fell from the Faith, showing that the love of God in this life cannot safely be divorced from humility and fear.

"The Eucharist is supremely the sacrifice of love, of the love of God for man; and what is the whole aim and desire of love? To cease to belong to itself in order to belong to its object, to breathe out its own life into the life of the being loved. This only is its term and end and period, nothing less than this. Love is altogether intolerant of duality; it must have union, union complete and entire, union of all existence, whether bodily or spiritual. Ah love! What histories are written of its power, what miracles, what prodigies has it wrought! But the one miracle of its desire, the one prodigy which could satisfy its aims, has ever been, must ever be, beyond the power of all but God, in whom alone Love is Almighty and could attain its end, to be a part of its desired, or not so much a part as all, to unite itself to it, to live in it, to mingle and confound itself with it, to effect a communion of substances, a oneness of being. Truly, therefore, *Cum dilexisset suos, usque*

*in finem dilexite eos*—loving His own, He loved them to the end of love. He alone, of all men who ever lived, not because He alone desired to compass that end, but because He alone could; for He was God-man. And since He could, therefore He was obliged to attain that end; for love must, by its own necessary law, go to the extent of its capability. For man's sake, to become man, to immolate Himself for man: this was much, but it was not enough. The law of love, in Him almighty, necessitated Him to more, namely, to its end—achieved in the Eucharist.

“Where is the love that would not accomplish the miracle of transubstantiation if it only could? Where true love that would not cry to the beloved with rapturous ecstasy, *Accipite, manducate*, take, eat, this is My Body. *Bibite*, drink, it is My Blood!” Had Jesus been but man, the Eucharist would not have been at all, or been but a mere figure; but because Jesus was God, therefore it is a reality.

Were there nothing else  
For which to praise the Heavens but only love,  
That only love were cause enough for praise.

## IX—"Fides Quærens Intellectum"

One that learned to believe first and then sought to understand, which I take to be the natural order of a Christian school, where faith must in most matters direct reason and lead the way to understanding.—Cardinal Allen, preface to *Souls Departed*.

A GOOD Catholic who had devoted the best years of his life to the study of Hebrew gradually arrived at the painful conviction that there is a consensus of opinion amongst the most eminent Hebrew scholars of the day that St Jerome's knowledge of that language was so imperfect that some, even of the most fundamental prophecies concerning the Messias, are entirely mistranslations, so that Christianity itself seemed to him unhinged and the authority of the Church and the wisdom of the Fathers and the Doctors to be melting away.

Another good Catholic who had devoted a life of diligent research to science, especially geology and biology, is obliged sadly to admit that their record of the creation of the world and the origin of man is in direct conflict with the account of those phenomena given in the Book of Genesis.

How could a priest, himself entirely innocent of both Hebrew and natural science, most wisely pour wine and oil into two such wounded souls?

Would it be true and prudent to speak to them as follows? "You are tempted. The temptation is directed against your faith. Temptation is not sin, but it agitates the soul. This agitation proves the presence of your faith. If you had no faith, you would have no agitation. But this state may be-

come dangerous, because it makes clear observation difficult—it unsteadies the eye of the soul.

“First of all, try to be calm and trustful in God. Recall His presence, His wisdom, His love, and your own nothingness, dependence and ignorance. In the calm of this self-abasement, remember what Faith is. Faith is the humility of the intellect, the obedience to and the worship of God by the intellect. To elicit this homage in act, God gives His revelation under such conditions that to obtain possession of it the intellect is obliged to come down from on high and prostrate itself.

“To the simple and ignorant this descent is short and easy, and therefore of comparatively little merit; to the learned and gifted it is very steep and difficult and therefore very meritorious.”

With the fundamental mysteries of faith, such as the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Resurrection, we use our reason, but without ever putting our Faith on its trial; we do not seek a verdict from reason for or against Faith. It is always *Fides quærens intellectum*, never *Intellectus judicans fidem*, never reason sitting in judgement on the Faith as on a possible deceiver. Faith seeking reason, not so much for her own support as for the enlightenment of reason, almost as the mother seeks her wayward child, for reason is born of natural faith.

“When we consider,” says Cardinal Newman, “how common it is in the world at large to consider the intellect as the characteristic part of our nature, the silence of Scripture in regard to it, not to mention its positive disparagement of it, is very striking. In the Old Testament scarcely any mention is made of the existence of the reason as a distinct and chief attribute of mind.”



Again the Cardinal says: "The foolish things of the world confound the wise far more completely than the weak the mighty. Human philosophy was beaten from its usurped province, but not by any counter philosophy; and unlearned Faith, establishing itself by its own inherent strength, ruled the reason as far as its own interests were concerned, and from that time has employed it in the Church, first as a captive, then as a servant; not as an equal, and in no wise (far be it) as a patron."

As in the case of the eternal truths, we are content to understand, just so far as the light of reason will carry us, and after that bow down and accept the simple facts of God's Word, so must we act in the case of the Bible.

It is a most mysterious record from beginning to end, and must remain mysterious to the last.

We may reason on it to the utmost, if we do so without ever putting its credibility on its trial.

Let your faith in the Bible be more and more "according to knowledge," but do not make your understanding of it the measure of your faith in it.

The Church is the inspired interpreter of the Bible, to her it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to the rest—to you and to me—in parables. So said our Lord to His Apostles when they asked for an explanation of the parable of the sower. The simple, illiterate fishermen were to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and the learned Scribes and Pharisees, who had the letter which killeth embroidered on their garments, must humbly condescend to seek the spirit which quickeneth from them, or grope for ever in the darkness of error.

The Church's anxiety used to be to save men

from running on the rock of Bible Christianity, *Scripture, the only Rule of Faith*. Now her every effort is to save the descendants of Bible Christians from the opposite extreme, the whirlpool of total disbelief in the divinity of Scripture.

God has wrapped up His truth in mystery, and that mystery will be interpreted by God through His chosen instruments in the manner and measure sufficient to meet the moral and religious aspirations of the soul, but never sufficient to satisfy the pride of the human intellect.

Its mysteries will never open to the vain inquisitiveness of human science. The geologist, biologist, grammarian and historian will call it foolishness. They will set it at naught because it will not pander to worldly pride and vanity. They will blindfold it and spit upon it and bid it prophesy. They will gibbet it between malefactors such as Mohammed and Buddha.

When the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, His condescension was a scandal to the learned.

He was set as a sign to be contradicted, and for the fall of many. It is only analogous that when the wisdom of the Father condescends to clothe itself in human language, addressing Himself for moral and religious purposes to the unlearned majority of all generations, he should become a stumbling-block to some believers and a scandal to scientific Gentiles. But blessed are they that shall not be scandalized in Him. St Augustine says, "Sed si non utatur Scriptura talibus verbis, non se quodammodo familiaris insinuat omni generi hominum, quibus vult esse consultum, ut et perterreat superbientes, et excitet negligentes, et exerceat quærentes, et alat intelli-

gentes, quod non faceret si non se prius inclinasset, et quodammodo descenderet ad jacentes."

The fate of those two great prime ministers of Pharaoh, the chief butler and chief baker, was told to them in the mystery of a dream, and they had to learn the meaning from the poor unknown Hebrew prisoner who was set to minister to them.

"Doth not interpretation belong to God? Tell me your dream," said Joseph, for it was given to him to unlock God's mystery in that revelation.

A great message of life and death to all the people is given by God to King Pharaoh, wrapped up again in the mystery of a dream.

The learned soothsayers are at a loss to interpret it. The poor Hebrew prisoner again has to be sent for, and the king and all his learned and scientific men have to learn. "Without me God shall give Pharaoh a prosperous answer." In other words Joseph said that he would explain simply by divine illumination, not by any natural learning such as that of the soothsayers.

No doubt the scientific Egyptians were restless and indignant and perhaps amongst themselves indulged in scorn and ridicule until the verification of the interpretation.

All the saving hope in the coming Messiah also was enveloped in the mysterious words of the prophets, and the prophet Daniel had to be sent for to unlock the mysterious writing that told the doom of Baltassar. What matter if the soothsayers of Baltassar's court should declare that the literal meaning of *Mane Thecel Phares* was quite different from Daniel's interpretation, or that it was quite impossible to parse them, as they stood, therefore that they could only be considered nonsense; the event proved that with Daniel was their

spiritual meaning, the judgement of God on Babylon.

So if the Hebrew of the Bible reads to the student not only different from, but contradictory to, the Church's adopted meaning, the real meaning is with the Church, not with the scholar. But if it reads only different, let him think of St Augustine's words, "Ita cum alius dixerit, Hoc sensit quod ego; et alius, Immo illud quod ego; religiosius me arbitror dicere, cur non utrumque potius si utrumque verum est? Et si quid tertium, et si quid quartum, et si *quid omnino aliud* verum quispiam in his verbis videt, cur non illa omnia vidisse credatur, per quem Deus unus sacras litteras vera et diversa visuris multorum sensibus temperavit? . . . . Sensit ille (Moyses) omnino in his verbis, atque cogitavit cum ea scriberet, quidquid hic veri potuimus invenire, et quidquid nos non potuimus, aut nondum possumus, et tamen in eis inveniri potest."\* The Jews of the time of our Lord interpreted Scripture literally. They expected the kingdom of the Messias to be of this world. They were immovably convinced that it would be so; we know how fatally they had misinterpreted Scripture.

The good Catholic who has been brought up in the unquestioning acceptance of the Bible is naturally startled when science suddenly throws into strong relief its unfathomable mysteriousness.

The spirit of Antichrist may use the wonders of natural science to discredit the mysteries of God's revelation, so as, if possible, to deceive even the elect. The waves may cover the ship till even the chosen twelve are afraid and the Divine Master may appear to be asleep; nevertheless, "Why are

\* Conf. xii, 31.

ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" The Lord of Nature and Revelation is with us. He can command the winds and the sea, and there will come a calm.

All the records of creation, whether of science or revelation, are merely fragmentary and are but partially interpreted; the Scripture record has answered its religious and moral purpose for six thousand years; and now, because your reading of the one record does not tally with your reading of the other, you are tempted to throw away the Scripture record. I would say, throw away neither, sit down and bear the apparent contradiction. But, if your mind is uncontrollably restless under the inconsistency, suspend your scientific judgements and conclusions, or lay aside for a time the record which has no divinely appointed interpreter, not the one which has, and to beliefs in which so many threats and promises are attached.

Why need your countenance be sadder than usual because science has emphasized the mysteriousness of Scripture? Was it all quite plain and easy to understand before? Why! the history of Eden and the fall of our first parents is a maze of mystery, and patently at variance with the experience of our daily life. The conditions of Adam's life in innocency, the non-existence of death as a pain or punishment, the converse with God, the arch-fiend as a serpent and a talking serpent, the banishment, the guarding of the gate by seraphs with flaming swords, and the utter vanishing of all traces of Eden—all this and much more, although it has been before our minds as an unquestionable fact from our earliest childhood, is surely in reality as mysterious as the visions of the Apocalypse. Nevertheless we do not chafe under it. Does not interpretation belong to God? Leave to



me, says Holy Church, the mysterious revelation, for to her is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but to us in parables, that seeing we may not see, and that knowing we may not understand; that seeing and knowing sufficiently for our faith and morals, the mystery may still remain to be a more perfect probation of the humility of our intellect.

“We know in part and we prophesy in part.” Our knowledge and, indeed, our capacity for knowing the mystery of God’s kingdom resembles that of children in the things of this world, sufficient for the present state, but utterly incomplete; so much so, that even if the whole were revealed and explained, it seems doubtful whether we could, in this life, understand and express it. For St Paul tells us that the secret words which he heard in the third heaven were not given to man to utter. And on the other hand we know that God has said, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.” Where is the Scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? “Just Father,” prayed our Lord, “I thank Thee that Thou hast hidden these things from the prudent and hast revealed them to little ones.”

St Augustine says, “I resolved then to bend my mind to the Holy Scriptures, that I might see what they were. But behold, I see a thing not understood by the proud nor laid open to children, lowly in access, in its recesses lofty, and veiled with mysteries; and I was not such as could enter into it, or stoop my neck to follow its steps. For not as I now speak, did I feel when I turned to those Scriptures; but they seemed to me unworthy to be compared to the stateliness of Tully; for my swelling pride shrank from their lowliness, nor could my sharp wit pierce the interior thereof, yet were they

such as would grow up in a little one. But I disdained to be a little one; and, swollen with pride, took myself to be a great one.”\*

“*Mira profunditas eloquiorum tuorum, quorum ecce ante nos superficies blandiens parvulis; sed mira profunditas, Deus meus, mira profunditas! Horror est, intendere in eam; horror honoris, et tremor amoris. Odi hostes ejus vehementer. O si occidas eos gladio bis acuto, et non sint hostes ejus! Sic enim, amo eos occidi sibi ut vivant tibi.*”†

“Thy testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul hath sought them. The declaration of thy words giveth light and giveth understanding to little ones.”

In conclusion, then, I would say: Study the Hebrew tongue and the natural sciences with the profoundest erudition at your command. Speculate, if you will, on the antiquity of creation and the age of man, but read the Bible still with the simplicity of childhood. Earthly honour and glory may await you in the field of science, but beware of seeking triumph in the consecrated temple of Revelation, for our God is a jealous God, who will not suffer His honour to be given to another.

Do not lose sight of these points:

1. First, that God intends us to know only in part, as through a glass in a dark manner, that He has enveloped His truth in mystery.

2. Second, that it is given to the Church alone to interpret that mystery at certain times and in certain measure, according as the Holy Ghost gives her to speak.

3. And lastly, that two fragmentary records dealing with the same subject, when written for different purposes, are not likely to read coinci-

\* Conf. iii, 5.

† Conf. xii, 14.

dentally; but that, as being God's records, when completed, they will be perfectly consistent. As you never accept the theories and conclusions of science without an implicit reservation in favour of possible discoveries in the future, so make a still more distinct and absolute reservation in favour of any interpretation of Scripture by the Church.

If at this moment your Hebrew or your science is irreconcilable with an explicit interpretation by the Church, abandon it at once, so far as it is irreconcilable, and humbly accept the Church's teaching on that point as on all others. So will reason travel further by the light of faith than it could ever do by its own natural light, and faith will preserve its heavenly appointed sovereignty over the soul, "whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge be destroyed.'

## X—Modern Idolatry: What are its Roots in Human Nature ?

**A**S faith, hope and charity are the great theological virtues, because they relate immediately to God, so idolatry is the great theological crime. As relating immediately to God it is, in the abstract, the most heinous of sins. In practice it has been the prolific mother of the most degrading immorality. St Paul numbers it amongst the works of the flesh. The Book of Wisdom thus sums up a category of its evil consequences, "for the worship of abominable idols is the cause and the beginning and the end of all evil."\*

The thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Wisdom are devoted to the analysis of idolatry. Three kinds are distinguished. The first kind is the worship of God's creation. Those who "have imagined either the fire, or the wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the great water, or the sun and moon to be the gods that rule the world, with whose beauty, if they, being delighted, took them to be gods, let them know how much the Lord of them is more beautiful than they; for the first author of beauty made all these things. Or if they admired their power and effects, let them understand by them, that He that made them is mightier than they: for by the greatness of the beauty of the creature the Creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby." And then, it would seem

\* Wisd. xiv, 27.

as though the Divine Spirit gives His sanction to something akin to the oft-maligned casuistry of Moral Theology, by excusing or palliating and discriminating the sinfulness of this class of idolaters saying, "But yet as to these, they are less to be blamed. For they perhaps err, seeking God, and desirous to find Him. For, being conversant amongst His works, they search, and they are persuaded that the things are good which are seen. But then, again, they are not to be pardoned. For if they were able to know so much as to make a judgement of the world, how did they not more easily find out the Lord thereof?"

This first kind of idolatry, the worship of God's works, might, it would seem, not always be a deadly sin. For the Holy Spirit contrasts unfavourably with them those who worship the works of men. The Sacred Text continues: "But, unhappy are they, and their hope is amongst the dead, who have called gods the works of the hands of men, gold and silver, the inventions of art, and the resemblance of beasts, or an unprofitable stone, the work of an ancient hand. Or, if an artist, a carpenter hath cut down a tree proper for his use, in the wood, and skilfully taken off the bark thereof, and with his art diligently formeth a vessel profitable for the common uses of life: and useth the chips of his work to dress his meat: and taking what was left thereof, which is good for nothing, being a crooked piece of wood and full of knots, carveth it diligently, when he hath nothing else to do, and by the skill of his art fashioneth it and maketh it like the image of a man, or the resemblance of some beast, laying it over with vermilion and painting it red, and covering every spot that is in it, and maketh a convenient dwelling place for it,



and setting it in a wall and fastening it with iron, providing for it, lest it should fall, knowing that it is unable to help itself; for it is an image, and hath need of help. And then maketh prayer to it, inquiring concerning his substance, and his children or his marriage. And he is not ashamed to speak to that which hath no life, and for health he maketh supplication to the weak, and for life prayeth to that which is dead, and for help calleth upon that which is unprofitable; for a good journey he petitioneth him that cannot walk; and for getting, and for working, and for the events of all things he asketh him that is unable to do anything."

These two kinds of idolatry, the worship of creatures and the worship of art, are purely pagan as distinguished from the idolatry of the Jews, which must have had a distinct character of its own because the chosen people knew the true God so well. They were familiar with His Almighty hand fighting for them, guiding them and feeding them. Therefore they are said to have erected the golden calf as an image of Jehovah. "It seems clear," says the *Catholic Dictionary*, "that the calf worship begun at Mount Sinai and continued in the northern kingdom at Bethel, etc., was meant as the worship of the true God, set before Israel in this symbolical form." "The Law and the Prophets condemn worship given to images of the true God."

We can hardly conceive that they thought that the calf was like God. They were accustomed to sacrifice sheep and oxen to God. They longed also for a visible object of worship, and therefore, they made, in God's honour, a permanent image of sacrifice. This, considering their idolatrous surround-

ings, was most dangerous; and in the face of the first commandment, a grievous disobedience. Since mankind was to be redeemed through the mystery of the Incarnation, in which God's Wisdom and Mercy would bridge over the infinite gulf between the Creator and the creature, any tendency to confound the Creator with the creature in worship was especially injurious. To slay and consume the creature in sacrifice was one thing, to honour the victim itself as representing the Deity was quite another thing and especially intolerable to God, seeing that the day was to come when, on the cross, victim and Deity would be really one in the Person of His own Divine Son.

It is not to my purpose, even if I had requisite knowledge, to enter into the immoral circumstances and tendencies, the innumerable varieties of corruption and superstition bound up with the practice of pagan idolatry. I only propose to submit to your judgement two or three natural, and in themselves innocent, mental conditions, or kinds of mental energy, common to every one, but which, in a soul which does not acknowledge the existence of God, necessarily produces an idolatrous attitude.

The first is the very ordinary yet remarkable power which may be called the power of make-believe. It is strikingly exemplified in that simple-minded sinner described above in the words of Wisdom. His behaviour is very like that of a child with a doll.

The mother ties up her shawl into a little bundle and gives it to the child, who nurses it, converses with it, puts it to bed, talks to it and treats it in all things as if it were a live child. It really knows that it is nothing of the kind, and is quite content to see

the shawl untied and wrapped again round mother's shoulders. Nevertheless the child had really hidden, for the time, its knowledge that its baby was only a shawl, so that it is a slight waking up from a reverie to recall that knowledge. For the time, the child gives itself up to the dominion of imagination, holding its practical reason in reserve.

But what is so curious is that we constantly see something at least analogous to this in the conduct of irrational creatures. Give the little kitten, which has never seen a mouse, a cork to play with. It does not simply knock that cork about, it makes believe that it is a mouse. It strokes it round the legs of the table, crouches and springs upon it, making believe that it is nearly worsted in a death-struggle with it, rolls on its back and fights with that cork for dear life. Then it pretends to have lost it, and walks in the wrong direction and, as though casually turning, catches sight of it again and is upon it in one bound. The kitten, too, knows that the cork is no live thing, but it makes believe and puts in practice by hereditary instinct a complicated system of feline tactics of the chase. It may be difficult precisely to define where the similarity begins and ends in the behaviour of the idolater, the child and the kitten, but resemblance is obvious enough. The idolater is sinning, the child is playing innocently, and the kitten is acting by unconscious hereditary instinct. The sin of the idolater is not that he treats his wooden image as though it were alive. He might nurse it and sing to it as much as he liked, and be nothing worse than a child or an idiot, but the moment he puts his image above his own soul, it is for him on the

throne of God. Even if he only makes it his master—his king—his angel or his spiritual director, he becomes idolatrous, because master, king, angel and director have their appointed place in our regard from God. If we put the work of our hands in such a place, we are usurping God's authority, acting contrary to right reason, breaking the natural law. It may be some moral evil for a man to think as a child, and act as a child, and now that he is a man not to have put away the things of a child, but it is not the sin of idolatry. As a mesmerized person places his will in the power of another, so the idolater gives up his will to the wooden image, as it might appear, but really to his own imagination, a power given simply to be subordinate to the rational will, and quite incapable by its nature of guiding a soul, and therefore at the mercy of any evil spirit that may feel disposed to mount the box and take the reins of the soul. Hence "*Le pauvre pécheur est attelé au char de la vie, et le démon est sur le siège, qui le force d'avancer à grands coups de fouet.*"\* Hence it is that idolatry becomes, in the words of Wisdom above referred to, "the cause, the beginning, and the end of all evil."

I now pass from "make-belief" to another activity of the imagination—self-projection. All our perception of things around us are, I suppose, modifications of self-consciousness, a truth which has made some persons fall into the extravagance of thinking that we have no real knowledge of things outside ourselves. Self-projection is something beyond the mere perception of things. Many of our judgements on things around us, if we examine closely, are evidence of this mental projec-

\* *Curé d'Ars.*

tion of ourselves, making every allowance for conventional language and figures of speech. We call it, as a habit of mind, sympathy with nature.

A sympathetic nature would be one in whom this power is specially active. Thus we interpret the feelings of animals. The little bird or dog looks happy, or frightened, or cold, or hungry. We have thrown ourselves unconsciously into their position and, rightly or wrongly, judge of their feelings. Even the flowers we treat in the same way. We speak of "the pure lily, the proud, angry rose, the lowly, shy violet." So, again, whatever we take a special interest in we are apt to endow with life. The workman speaks to his cart, his wheelbarrow, his steam engine. He gives it a certain share in his own life, a companionship with himself. He projects himself into it mentally. "It is good," he says, "it has done its work well." Reason is not captivated in all this, but it passively submits to the caprice of the imagination. It is not always, I repeat, merely conventional language or figure of speech, some form and degree of mental self-projection takes place, not deliberate, of course, but spontaneous.

The flies are annoying ; not merely, we are annoyed by the flies. The arm-chair is an old friend. Now this is what the child does with the rag doll, and the idolater with his wooden image, and the Pantheist with all nature and, I say it with reverence, the Psalmist in the "*Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino.*"

In the latter case the devout soul makes nature a choir of adoration and worship by projecting itself into the works of God. In the former the infidel takes possession of the throne of God and in adoring the creature, is really adoring a projec-



tion of self. One of the Manichean aberrations into which St Augustine describes himself as falling seems to illustrate this strange faculty of the human mind: "Being insensibly and step by step drawn on to those follies, as to believe that a fig tree wept when it was plucked, and the tree, its mother, shed milky tears. Which fig notwithstanding (plucked by some other's, not his own guilt) had some (Manichean) saint eaten and mingled with his bowels, he should breathe out of it angels, yea, there shall burst forth particles of divinity, at every moan or groan in his prayer, which particles of the most high and true God had remained bound in that fig, unless they had been set at liberty by the teeth or belly of some elect saint!

"And I, miserable, believed that more mercy was to be shewn to the fruits of the earth than men for whom they were created."

It is to a somewhat analogous misguided use of this power of self-projection, or giving to irrational creatures a personification like our own, that I should ascribe the ever-increasing morbid sensitiveness nowadays to the suffering of the brute creation.

This then would seem to be the inevitable fate of the atheist scientist. He must become the idolater of the present day. The savages of central Africa are idolaters of a bygone day, only possible until their immemorial traditions and the gloom of their primeval forests have been dissipated. But the scientific atheist is the progressive idolater, in the foremost files of time. From the mere fact that the true God is not in his world, the throne of the true God must be filled by a false God, and filled it will be by his own science, which is no other than a projection of himself. If

God were in His rightful place in the scientific world, science would be one continuous "*Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino.*"

I have now spoken of "make-belief" and self-projection as connected with idolatry; the third and last mental habit I will discuss is in connexion with idolatrous hero-worship, viz., the worship of the ideal. It is, I suppose, a testimony to the truth that we are made for the worship of God, who is Himself the realization of every ideal perfection, that we long for and instinctively honour the ideal. And, paradoxical though it sounds, not the ideal in the abstract but the ideal in the real. We are glad to find a real embodiment, to some considerable extent, of ideal perfection, and then naturally and rightly we honour it. We panegyryze the real—raise it as near the ideal as we can, ignore imperfections, group the perfections together, emphasize and magnify the perfections, and so build up a hero. This hero worship is surely a right and proper worship and part of the worship due to God—the worship of Him in His creatures, from the highest creations of His grace down to the heroes of a merely natural order. But in cases where the existence of God is denied, hero-worship must partake of the nature of idolatry. The words of Wisdom seem to bear me out in this:

"For a father being afflicted with bitter grief, made to himself the image of his son who was quickly taken away; and him who then had died as a man, he began now to worship as a god, and appointed him rites and sacrifices among his servants. Then in process of time, wicked customs prevailing, this error was kept as a law; and statues were worshipped by commandment of the tyrants. And

those whom men could not honour in presence, because they dwelt afar off, they brought their resemblance from afar, and made an express image of the king whom they had a mind to honour: that by their diligence, they might honour as present, him that was absent. And to the worshipping of these, the singular diligence also of the artificer helped to set forward the ignorant. For he being willing to please him that employed him, laboured with all his art to make the resemblance in the best manner. And the multitude of men, carried away by the beauty of the work, took him now for a god, that a little before was but honoured as a man. And this was the occasion of deceiving human life; for men serving either their affection, or their kings, gave the incommunicable names to stones and wood."\*

The scientific unbeliever of the present day would, of course, repudiate with indignant scorn the accusation of being an idolater. His type of the modern idolater is the superstitious Roman Catholic burning candles before the image of the Virgin Mother of Christ. But in fact while the Catholic is really worshipping God in the highest of His creatures, the naturalist philosopher has allowed himself to be ravished by nature itself. He loves it with his whole heart and soul. He burns the brightest light of his genius for its sake, and adorns its altar with all the choicest flowers of his rhetoric. There he worships, there he adores. He makes-believe a divinity in nature, and endows it with the divine attributes of eternity and self-existence.

Would it be making too free with the Darwinian principle to say that the origin of this species may

\*Wisdom. xiv, 15-21.

be traced back to the simple-minded sinner who fastened up his vermilion-coloured idol with a staple to the wall?

The survival of the fittest working through so many ages has doubtless wrought a superficial change. The idolater of to-day has a supreme contempt for his aboriginal type; he is civilized and refined; the wooden image daubed with paint has disappeared, but the object of his worship is still the result of his own ingenuity, diligence and genius, that it is which he places on the throne of God. Vast museums and libraries are not sufficient to hold his deity, but his deity is a legitimate descendant from the primitive piece of art which in days of old was so easily accommodated in the niche in the wall. He may protest that he does not bend the knee or pray to nature. But he bows his mental powers—his will, his memory and understanding to nature, and proclaims her eternal and self-existent and himself only mortal. He offers sacrifice to his god and the victim is himself, his own life and love; “serving his own affection, he gives the incommunicable names to stone and wood.” He may protest that he has no god except mankind and no worship except philanthropy, but he does himself injustice. He has a god, the “ruler of the world of this darkness,” who says to him, “All this will I give thee, if falling down thou wilt adore me.” He has accepted the bribe, and cannot now refuse to worship the briber. There is no alternative for the unbelieving naturalist between idolatry and the divine abjuration, “Begone, Satan, the Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve.”

“Nor dost Thou draw near, but to the contrite in heart,” says St Augustine addressing God,

“nor art found by the proud, no, not though by curious skill they could number the stars and the sand, and measure the starry heavens, and track the courses of the planets. For with their understanding and wit, which Thou didst bestow on them, they search out these things; and much have they found out; and foretold many years before, eclipses of those luminaries, the sun and moon, what day and hour, and how many digits, nor did their calculation fail; and it came to pass as they foretold; and they wrote down the rules they had found out, and they are read at this day, and out of them do others foretell in what year, and month of the year, and what day of the month and what hour of the day, and what part of its light, moon or sun is to be eclipsed, and so it shall be as it is foreshowed. At these things, men that know not this art, marvel and are astonished, and they that knew it exult, and are puffed up; and by an ungodly pride departing from Thee, and failing of Thy light, they foresee a failure of the sun’s light, which shall be, so long before, but see not their own, which is. For they search not religiously whence they have the wit, wherewith they search out this. And finding that Thou madest them, they give not themselves up to Thee, to preserve what Thou madest; nor sacrifice to Thee what they had made themselves; nor slay their own soaring imaginations, as fowls of the air; nor their own diving curiosities, wherewith like the fishes of the sea they wander over the unknown path of the abyss; nor their own luxuriousness, as beasts of the field, that Thou, Lord, a consuming fire, mayest burn up those dead cares of theirs, and re-create themselves immortally.”\*

\* Conf. v, 4.



## XI—A Protest against the Spirit of Higher Criticism

“Numquid omnes linguis loquuntur? Numquid omnes interpretantur? Aemulamini autem charismata meliora! Et adhuc excellentiorem viam vobis demonstro.”—1 Cor. xii, 30, 31.

### THE HIGHER CRITICISM

*A Sonnet by Charles Tennyson Turner*

O Sophistry! how many lips have kissed  
And fondled thy puft hand, bedaubed with ink  
Of the “higher Criticism,” which does not shrink  
To substitute, for our sound faith in Christ,  
A dreamy, hollow, unsubstantial creed:  
Strikes its small penknife through the Covenants  
Both old and new, and, in a trice, supplants  
Without replacing all we love and need;  
How blank will be thy scholarly regret  
To see these blurred and shredded Gospels mount  
Beyond the knives and ink-horns!--buoyant yet  
With native strength of which thou mad’st no count  
And, as heaven’s lively oracles, confest  
By all, disprove, perforce, each lying test.

### *A Similitude*

**M**Y parents dying early, I became possessed, as their only heir, of a very considerable collection of family heir-looms—plate, furniture and jewellery. Some pieces were of the greatest antiquity, almost prehistoric. I felt a great affection for them. Some of the rings and seals I could remember worn by my grandfather, and there were the brooches, earrings, bracelets, coronets and necklaces I had so admiringly gazed at, as I sat on my dear mother’s knee. Often and often had my parents told me, as

I touched the treasures with my childish hand, how they remembered them in the far-off years of their childhood and had heard strange, romantic and chivalrous stories connected with them.

One day, a party of gentlemen drove up to the house, and sending in their cards introduced themselves as connected with a well-known archæological society, and asked leave to inspect the family treasures, of which they had heard as of remarkable value. I at once acceded to their request and unlocked the chests and cases for them. They spent the rest of the day in a very diligent and minute inspection, after which they thanked me, saying how exceedingly interesting they had found them and said they would send me a copy of their report, which would be printed by their society press in a short time. I thanked them, and they left. Accordingly, in the course of about a month I received by post a printed report of their inspection. I opened it with some eager curiosity and complacency that the value of my treasures would now be publicly appreciated.

But I was soon disillusioned; as I read, a sickening disappointment and disgust so possessed me that I could hardly go on reading without choking, which was relieved at last by a storm of rage with these scientific gentlemen and with myself for being so vain and accessible to their learned curiosity. The pamphlet abounded in catalogues and dates and weights and measures, interspersed with a few illustrations, which, to my eye, were but cruel caricatures, and concluded by naming a sum of money, which they said might be considered to be the present market value of the collection. They had discovered with their microscopes, so they declared, in some of the rarest

old pieces places where there appeared to have been a fracture and a mending, and in one or two cases, where a jewel of inferior value had apparently replaced some more ancient that had been lost.

I flung the report away from me with loathing.

Not long after this, I accidentally met two of my scientific friends, if, in courtesy, I must call them such; and they at once asked me if I had been pleased with their report. I replied that I could not find words to describe my disappointment. They said they were surprised at that, because they had taken every care to be most accurate. I said, it was no use my trying to argue the matter with them, as we looked at it from entirely different points of view. I said these treasures are mine and mine only, and can never belong to anyone else, as they belong to me, even if they were to pass into other hands. These treasures are to me saturated and encrusted with immemorable traditions of my family and ancestry, and bound up with all the tenderest and most precious personal associations. Their value to me is not to be measured by scale and rule, and computed in pounds, shillings and pence. They said, certainly they could not be expected to take into account a value which had no objective reality. Science could only register facts, not feelings, and public opinion would regard my estimate as nothing more than personal sentiment. So much the worse for science and public opinion, I replied; they are not competent to judge of the true value of such things. You might as well tell me that the real value of the beautiful woods that surround this park is what a timber merchant would be willing to contract for them. The hand of science is hard

and materialistic, and can only lacerate with its handling the most delicate and intricate points of value, in the estimate of treasures that are treasures to the whole man, not merely to his head but still more to his heart. I can only hope, gentlemen, that if, as no doubt you do, you possess what, to you personally, is of inestimable value, you may never be so indiscreet as to subject it to the stony eye of science and ask for a valuation. They said they were sorry to have hurt my feelings in the matter, but that the world, in these days, demanded scientific facts; they had acted in the name of science, and could not, if they would, go beyond their brief. I said, I acknowledge that it is an age of dictionary facts and catalogue valuation, which mutilates and often ignores reality in trying to make all truth common property.

We bowed stiffly and parted.

The above may help to illustrate the kind of antipathy which, I suppose, all Catholics feel, more or less, towards the spirit of Biblical criticism outside the Church; a feeling which they know to be intensely real and just, but which cannot receive sympathetic recognition from the critics themselves. Secular critics will say if the Bible is the truth and nothing but the truth, the most rigid application of the laws of hermeneutics and an uncompromising adjustment to the indisputable facts of secular history and to the immutable laws of science, should result in the elucidation and confirmation of the Bible. This, I think, would be questionable, even if the Bible were purely human, considering, on the one hand, the incompleteness of historic and scientific knowledge, and on the other, the extreme antiquity and heterogeneous character of the Bible, but, since it is

divine as well as human, it is still less surprising that human science should be at fault in its efforts to harmonize the Sacred Records with itself. The Bible is in a metaphorical sense an incarnation of the Holy Ghost—the divine wisdom clothed in human words; therefore, there must be limits beyond which the inquisitiveness of science becomes impertinent and inconclusive, as in the parallel case of the Sacred Humanity of the Second Person an extreme scientific scrutiny is felt to be irreverent intrusion by devout believers in our Lord's Divinity.

*"Mira profunditas eloquiorum tuorum, quorum ecce ante nos superficies blandiens parvulis; sed mira profunditas, Deus meus, mira profunditas! Horror est intendere in eam; horror honoris, et tremor amoris. Odi hostes ejus vehementer. O si occidas eos gladio bis acuto, et non sint hostes ejus! Sic enim amo eos occidi sibi, ut vivant tibi."\**

The Bible, Old and New Testament, is the heirloom of the Catholic Church, and as the Prophet's scroll was mystically eaten and digested, and became the source of his prophetic utterances, so the Bible may be said to have been eaten and digested by the Church. She has completely assimilated it with her flesh and with her bone. It has always been an integral part of her dogmas. All her teaching, moral as well as dogmatic, is cemented with it. She has preserved it and cherished it through all revolutions of time. It has been the daily bread with which she has fed her children. The lips and hearts of all the saints in heaven have been steeped in it. The Church has copied, translated, illuminated and commented on every word of it. The Bible is hers and hers alone, by every right of immemorial prescription.

\* Conf. St Augustine, xii, 14.



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In the Missal and Breviary she has embossed every inch of it with the richest gold of traditional mystical interpretation and ritualistic adaptation. The Bible is inseparable from the Church and lives with her life whose life is divine and indestructible. If it were possible to conceive a separation between the two, the Bible could only be cut out of the Church after death. It is not too much to say that the final cause of the Bible, taken as a whole, is that it may be, with the Holy Eucharist, the supersubstantial bread of the Catholic Church. "Thanks be to Thee," says the *Imitation*, "O Lord Jesus, light of Eternal Light, for the table of Holy doctrine, which Thou hast afforded us by the ministry of Thy servants the Prophets and Apostles and other teachers."

The Bible stands like an ancient and magnificent fruit tree, ever verdant, ever blooming, ever heavy with fruit, in the garden of the Church alone. Outside the Church it is like a tree struck by lightning holding its blackened skeleton towards heaven, deprived of all that divine life it once derived from her, the canker-worm of private interpretation germinating only the parasitic life of multitudinous sects. "For as he is better off," says St Augustine, "who knows how to possess a tree and return thanks to Thee for the use thereof, although he know not how many cubits high it is or how wide it spreads, than he that can measure it and count all its boughs, and neither owns it nor knows or loves its Creator; so a believer, whose all this world of wealth is, and who, having nothing, yet possesseth all things, by cleaving unto Thee whom all things serve, though he knows not even the circles of the Great Bear, yet is it folly to doubt but he is

in a better state than one who can measure the heavens and number the stars and poise the elements, yet neglecteth Thee, who hast made all things in number, weight and measure."

It seems then a sacrilegious impertinence that modern science should trespass on the Church's ground, and, with pickaxe and spade grouting at the immemorial roots of her tree of life, declare that the nature of the soil and condition of the roots are not in accordance with the universally acknowledged principles of modern horticulture. Would it not be an inconceivable marvel if records so ancient and so various in character should, though absolutely genuine and truthful, be easily reconcilable with the requirements of modern history and science? Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? The fruits of wisdom and sanctity which the Bible has borne under the cultivation of the infallible Church for two thousand years is a more convincing evidence of its Divine origin than any diploma she could possibly win from the department of modern history and science. "Wisdom is justified by her children."

The real proof of the divine authorship of the Bible does not rest upon the demonstrable identification of the human instrument or upon the demonstrable reconciliation with secular history and science, but upon the uninterrupted fructifying life of the Bible in the Catholic Church, just as the continuous and consistent development of doctrinal life is the most cogent proof of the divinity of the Church herself. Secular science may be very scornful and very relentless in its dealings with Biblical difficulties, but it cannot ultimately succeed in discrediting the Bible, if for no higher reason, than because its weapon will not carry so

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far. Its range is quite inadequate. It may explode a bomb here and a bomb there, wreck a café here and a palace there; but human nature and common sense are too strong for the anarchist, whether he be encountered in the serene atmosphere of Biblical higher criticism or in the murky depths of a dynamitist laboratory. Its only weapon is formal logic, and the experience of everyday life shows that formal logic, taken by itself, is inadequate as a conclusive test of moral and religious truth. Antiquarian arguments are unsatisfactory on either side, as compared with the visible, almost tangible, moral and doctrinal virtue of the Bible, as evinced in the past and present life of the Catholic Church. May we not apply to the Bible what Cardinal Newman says of Christianity,\* "Certainly it has its foundations in past and glorious memories, but its power is in the present. It is no dreary matter of antiquarianism. We do not contemplate it in conclusions drawn from dumb documents and dead events, but by faith exercised in living objects and by the appropriation and use of ever-recurring gifts . . . creating a certitude of its truth by arguments too various for enumeration, too personal and deep for words, too powerful and concurrent for refutation." "Faith and humility are the only spells which conjure up the image of heavenly things into the letter of inspiration, and faith and humility consist, not in going about to prove, but in the outset confiding on the testimony of others."

The attempt to justify such a position as this before the tribunal of higher critics, would be as hopeless as to plead royal lineage, ecclesiasti-

\* Gram. cap. ult.

cal dignity or moral sanctity before the tribunal of Robespierre.

The trial of the Bible is a mockery. Its condemnation is a foregone conclusion, because it is a book of mystery and miracles from beginning to end. And if we, too, only held it as Protestants do, with the feeble hand of private judgement, we should be forced at last to relax our hold and let it perish. But for us it is safe in the divine grasp of the mystical body of Christ, the Universal Church triumphant and militant.

It must be painful to be obliged to fire upon a crowd of rioters, without having an opportunity of leading to a place of safety the ignorant and innocent who are struggling, it may be, against them, but who are inextricably mixed up with them. It is painful to have to speak indiscriminately of Protestant and infidel—of Biblical conservative, radical and anarchist outside the Church; but those virtuous Protestants who love the Bible and hate its enemies, like the author of the introductory sonnet, are fighting against a demon begotten of their own mother, private interpretation, and themselves bear witness to their relationship by the unholy instinct which makes them, even in the very heat of battle with the infidel, turn and upbraid the Catholic Church.

Two mothers came to King Solomon; one had overlain her child in sleep, and it was dead; and then she gave her tacit consent that the living child of the other should be cut in two in the name of justice.

Protestantism, in her three hundred years of sleep, has overlain the Bible, crying in her dream, "The Bible and the Bible only." And now that at length she wakes to find it dead in her arms, she

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looks with jealousy upon the living Bible of the Catholic Church. The sword of sceptical science is raised to slay the living child, but a greater than Solomon is here to stay the hand of unbelief. Secular science will hold its crowner's quest over the dead body of the Protestant Bible; it will dissect it limb by limb, and subject each part to its own test of truth, and triumphantly proclaim its verdict of death from superstitious fable; but the real cause of death we know to have been severance from the living Church.

The spirit of the higher criticism, I conclude, is a violation of the sacred and incommunicable parental rights of the Church over the Bible. The history of the Church is the only interpretation and justification of the Bible. Outside the Church the condition of the Bible has been, first stagnation, then corruption. Within the Church it has been vigorous, fructifying life. The vital energy of the Bible is inseparable from the past and present vitality of the Church. Our learned brethren in the Church who have a knowledge of the Biblical tongues possess a precious and rare gift given unto profit to the few, but they cannot meet the higher critics precisely on their own level, because the Catholic axiom is the Divinity of the Bible and the secular axiom, the inviolability of human science. Nor can it be allowed that the final issues in such a cause are to be concluded in the misty atmosphere of prehistoric and antediluvian records.

The fastidious appetite of the higher critics for scientific verification will not be satisfied as long as there remains any suspicion of mystery in the sacred writings; and what will remain of the Bible when all mystery has been eliminated?



"The Scripture," says the author of *The Endowments of Man*, "were taken out of the hands of that authority to which God committed them for their safety, and man has been taken out of the hands of God. After this the process of dissolution began, destructive criticism was first applied to the Scriptures and afterwards to man. The diviner elements were first eliminated from the Scriptures, and next we see the effort to eliminate the diviner elements from man." "But he said: Nay, Father Abraham; but if one went to them from the dead, they will do penance. And he said to him: If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one rise again from the dead."

#### HOW THE HIGHER CRITICISM BLESSES THE BIBLE

*A Sonnet by Charles Tennyson Turner*

You say 'tis still God's Book, still true and wise,  
Though you have shorn it of its noblest parts,  
Disparaged all its great biographies,  
And left no nourishment for pining hearts.  
But that's a foodless river where the fish  
Are stolen from the waters every fin,  
Whence thieves have harried all that God put in  
And spared us scarce enough to freight a dish.  
So have you stolen away our food for faith  
With Moses disallowed, and Paul reviewed,  
And Christ Himself by rival pens pursued  
That race each other thro' His life and death.  
It irks my soul to see how bland you look,  
Giving your foolish blessing to the Book.

## XII—The Vanity of Unchristian Science

"It seemsto me," says Murray to Dr Johnson, "that we are not angry with a man for controverting an opinion which we believe and value; we rather pity him."

*Johnson.* "Why, sir, to be sure, when you wish a man to have that belief which you think is of infinite advantage, you wish well to him; but your primary consideration is your own quiet. If a madman were to come into this room with a stick in his hand, no doubt we should pity the state of his mind, but our primary consideration would be to take care of ourselves. We should knock him down first, and pity him afterwards. No, sir; every man will dispute with good humour upon a subject upon which he is not interested. I will dispute very calmly upon the probability of another man's son being hanged; but if a man zealously expresses the probability that my own son will be hanged, I shall certainly not be in a very good humour with him."

*Murray.* "But, sir, truth will always bear an examination."

*Johnson.* "Yes, sir; but it is painful to be forced to defend it. Consider, sir; how should you like, though conscious of your innocence, to be tried before a jury for a capital crime once a week?"—Introductory Prologue from Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.

**I** NOW give the words of Mr Frederick Harrison, quoted by *The Spectator*, on which I am going to remark: "To the old theology the earth was the grand centre, and the sun the universe, and the other heavenly bodies were adjuncts and auxiliaries to it. With a geocentric astronomy as the root idea of science, the anthropomorphic Creator, the celestial Resurrection and the Divine Atonement were natural and homogeneous ideas. No one can conceive the scheme of salvation growing up, with anything but a

geocentric system of thought. With a geocentric science and an anthropomorphic philosophy, all this was natural enough. But with a science where this planet shrinks into an unconsidered atom, with a transcendental philosophy to which the anthropomorphic is the contemptible, the Augustinian theology goes overboard."

Mr Harrison disputes calmly, if he may be said to dispute at all, with anything which he regards as so mythological as Christianity. However, if it was unnecessary to knock it down, he has condescended to kick it overboard in the person of St Augustine, and then he can afford to pity his victim: it was only natural after all—the absurd "Scheme of Salvation," Anthropomorphic Creator," "celestial Resurrection," and "Divine Atonement"—considering their preposterous science and philosophy.

Mr Frederick Harrison is, I believe, quite one of the leaders of thought at the present day. A writer in *The Spectator* says of him, "In several respects, the ablest and most Christian of our English Positivists."

Mr Ruskin, describing the works of an American painter of sudden notoriety, said something to this effect, that he had succeeded with impunity in throwing a pot of paint in the face of the public. Now, if the public was Christian, Mr Harrison's words would be a little short of spitting in the face of the public. Do not be shocked! I know he spoke in faultless English, his dress may be perfection, but he has spit in the face of every Christian. His manners, his affections, his tastes, his education may be perfect, but he has no home, no *locus standi* in a Christian world. The raw material for instruction, pagan or infidel, has its place;

the poor sinner, going about in places without water, seeking rest, has his place in the Christian world; but the triumphant, defiant scoffer deserves to be banished. It has not been uncommonly supposed by theologians that the occasion of Lucifer's fall and the consequent creation of hell may have been his refusal to accept the mystery of the Incarnation. Whether he formulated his objection on astronomical grounds, such as Mr Harrison's, can only be subject for conjecture. If stars there were, at that early date, there could have been no danger of Lucifer adopting a geocentric science. Perhaps he said his philosophy was transcendental and that the anthropomorphic was contemptible to the angelic mind. We know the sequel. Was it that Lucifer's mind shrank from the contemplation of the measureless depths of Divine condescension? Well it might! Or did it rather shrink from its own humiliation in having to adore the Eternal subject to time, the Omnipotent in bonds, the Creator in created nature, God-man for all eternity? Was it humility or was it pride—love of God or love of self—that was the cause of his fall?

But let us now consider the impudence of Mr Harrison's blasphemy. If he came raging against Christianity with every appearance of being possessed, we should not call his blasphemy impudent, and his type would be as old as Christianity itself. He feels that to show the faintest sign of irritation would be a concession, almost an acknowledgement that Christianity had some imaginable basis of possibility. He contemptuously consigns it to oblivion and complacently excuses it. Let us examine more closely the flippant epigrams in which this positivist tramples on the adorable

mystery of Divine condescension, the Incarnation—the object of Christian faith and love, the source of Christian hope, humility and contrition. He says, “To the old theology the earth was the grand centre and sum of the universe.” Readers of the Breviary are familiar with the words of a homily by St Hilary, “*Sal est in se uno continens aquæ et ignis elementum, et hoc ex duobus est unum.*” Would it be fair to say, “To the old theology salt was the combination of fire and water”? As well might be said, “To the old theology the surface of the earth was a continuous plain,” or, “To the old theology the panacea for all bodily ailments was bleeding.” These variations of blasphemy might commend themselves to Mr Harrison. With salt composed of fire and water as the root idea of science it was only natural to believe in the universal deluge and hell fire; they are homogeneous ideas. Or with bleeding as the root idea of medical science, it was only natural to believe in the redemption of all mankind by blood.

To the old astronomy, not to the old theology, the earth was the grand centre and sum of the universe. And astronomy was not the root of theology. The old theology is taught as vigorously and believed as firmly now that the geocentric astronomy has long passed away. Mr Harrison affects to be scandalized at the idea of the Incarnation. The divine condescension would be too degrading under the present arrangement of worlds. If the sun and stars really revolved round the earth, if the earth were really the largest world, then it would be another matter, Mr Harrison might be induced to reconsider the appropriateness of the mystery. Surely there is a sense in which all the universe revolves round Mr



Harrison, in spite of his profound self-abasement, and all the heavenly bodies are merely his adjuncts and auxiliaries. With what sublime self-complacency he calls his own philosophy transcendental, because to his imagination the earth has shrunk into an unconsidered atom! How has it shrunk? Because astronomy has taught Mr Harrison that the worlds around are immeasurably larger than ours. Is this transcendental philosophy, that estimates value merely by physical proportion? Then the village idiot was a transcendental philosopher, who preferred pence to shillings because they were heavier and larger in circumference.

The lives of Christian saints bear witness that Christian theology and philosophy has been successful for nineteen centuries in raising the souls of men above this visible universe, and teaching them that a world invisible is the great, the eternal world where He is seen who made all things out of nothing and before whom not this earth alone, but all possible creation is as nothing—but not an unconsidered nothing, for He has poured out the infinite treasures of His power and wisdom and love upon this nothing, and made it for an eternal heaven in Himself. Is not this truly transcendental philosophy which has taught its students, not astronomical vapouring and stargazing, but to mortify the body and to sacrifice the pleasures of this life to secure the life beyond the grave?

Though Mr Harrison has committed the memory of the great St Augustine to the deep, and all-Christian theology and philosophy with him, the utterance of that great name in conjunction with his blasphemy may perhaps serve to raise a word

of rebuke from the watery grave. "For thou art great, O Lord, and hast respect upon the humble, but the proud Thou beholdest afar off. Nor dost Thou draw near, but to the contrite in heart, nor art found by the proud, no, not though by curious skill they could number the stars and the sand, and measure the starry heavens, and track the courses of the planets. For with their understanding and wit which Thou bestowest on them, they search out these things; and much have they found out; and foretold many years before, eclipses of those luminaries the sun and moon; what day and hour, and how many digits; nor did their calculations fail; and it came to pass as they foretold; and they wrote down the rules they found out, and these are read at this day, and out of them do others foretell in what year and month of the year and what day of the month and what hour of the day and what part of its light, moon or sun is to be eclipsed, and so it shall be, as it is foreshowed. At these things men that know not this art marvel and are astonished, and they that know it exult, and are puffed up and by an ungodly pride departing from Thee, and failing of Thy light, they foresee a failure of the sun's light, which shall be, so long before, but see not their own, which is. But they knew not the way, Thy word, by whom Thou madest these things which they number, and themselves who number, and the sense whereby they perceive what they number, and the understanding out of which they number; or that of Thy wisdom there is no number. But the Only-begotten is Himself made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification, and was numbered amongst us. They knew not this way, whereby to descend to Him from

themselves and by Him ascend unto Him. They knew not this way, and deemed themselves exalted amongst the stars and shining, and behold they fell upon the earth, and their foolish heart was darkened.

“By cleaving unto Thee, whom all things serve, though he knew not even the circles of the Great Bear, yet is it folly to doubt but he is in a better state than one who can measure the heavens and number the stars and poise the elements, yet neglecteth Thee, who hast made all things in number, weight and measure.”

Are such thoughts as these inspired by an anthropomorphic philosophy or a geocentric science?

“And what is this? I asked the earth and it answered me, ‘I am not He,’ and whatsoever are in it confessed the same. I asked the sea and the deeps and the creeping, living things, and they answered, ‘We are not thy God, seek above us.’ I asked the moving air, and the whole air with its inhabitants answered, ‘Anaximenes was deceived, I am not God.’ I asked the heavens, sun, moon, stars, ‘Nor,’ say they, ‘are we the God whom thou seekest.’ And I replied unto all things which encompass the door of my flesh: ‘Ye have told me of my God that ye are not He; tell me something of Him.’ And they cried out with a loud voice, ‘He made us.’ . . . I asked the whole frame of the world about my God, and it answered me, ‘I am not He, but He made me.’

“Do the heaven and earth contain Thee, since Thou fillest them? or dost Thou fill them and yet overflow, since they do not contain Thee? And whither, when the heavens and the earth are filled, pourest Thou forth the remainder of Thyself? or hast Thou no need that aught contain Thee, who

containest all things, since what Thou fillest, Thou fillest by containing it? for the vessels which Thou fillest uphold Thee not, since though they were broken Thou wert not poured out. And when Thou art 'poured out' on us, Thou art not cast down, but Thou upliftest us; Thou art not dissipated, but Thou gatherest us. But Thou who fillest all things, fillest Thou them with Thy whole self? or since all things cannot contain Thee wholly, do they contain part of Thee? and all at once the same part? or each its own part, the greater more, the smaller less? And is, then, one part of Thee greater, another less? or art Thou wholly everywhere, while nothing contains Thee wholly? What art Thou then, my God? What, but the Lord God? For who is Lord but the Lord? or who is God save our God? Most highest, most good, most potent, most omnipotent; most merciful, yet most just; most hidden, yet most present, most beautiful, yet most strong; stable yet incomprehensible; unchangeable, yet all-changing; never new, never old; all-renewing, bringing ag; upon the proud, yet they know it not; ever working, ever at rest; still getting, yet never lacking; supporting, filling and over-spreading; creating nourishing and maturing; seeking, yet having all things. Thou lovest without passion; art jealous without anxiety; repentest, yet grieveest not; art angry and yet serene; changest Thy works, Thy purpose unchanged; receivest again what Thou findest, yet didst never lose; never in need, yet rejoicing in gains; never covetous, yet exacting usury. Thou receivest over and above, that Thou mayest owe; and who hath aught that is not Thine? Thou payest debts, owing nothing; remittest debts, losing nothing. And what have I

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now said, my God, my life, my holy joy? or what saith any man when he speaks of Thee? Yet woe to him that speaketh not, since mute are even the most eloquent.

“Too late loved I Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! too late I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee; deformed I, plunged amid those fair forms which Thou hast made.”

What will Mr Harrison give us in place of this, for he tells us that his science and transcendental philosophy has cast all this overboard?

“There is a vanity of science,” says Dr Ullathorne, “which is not less vicious than the moral vanity of the heart—a vanity wholly given to the elements of this world, to the exclusion of the solid things of the soul. This vanity vitiates both the man and his science, sometimes even to the absurd extent of his imagining that the science of this world may stand in place both of religion and of the highest and purest virtue. Yet, such an one sees nothing in the highest cause, nor in its final end. To him all is as though it were suspended on nothing, and all as though it tended to nothing. We may justly call this vanity, as Solomon discovered ages ago, in surveying the tendencies of the natural sciences, when cultivated apart from God. And vanity is vacuity. Like the devoting of the soul to the body, it leaves the inward man vacant and his spirit void; for neither the body nor the things of the body can fulfil the spirit, or give it rest, or bring the desired fruits to its toils. . . .

“A man without a communicative God is a man without a conscience, and a man without a conscience has fallen from the attributes of humanity



and become a monster. Yet this, we are told, is progress. Progress undoubtedly it is, a progress of descent from all that is noble and elevating in man to the lowest gulf of barbarism. . . . There are men who bore their eyes into matter until they can no longer see spirit, and who crowd their imagination with material forms until they blot from sight both God and the soul. But materialism can never form a science, much less a philosophy; it is utterly incapable of an intellectual principle. Material atoms, however arranged, can never be the recipients of truth or the generators of thought. Behind such theories there is a sensualism and pride at work which take a strange content in that kind of imaginary self-exultation that feeds itself on the lowering of all men. . . .

"Many years ago I saw a painting by Rubens at Cologne, the contemplation of which opened one of those intuitions that become a light to the mind for life. The subject of the picture, treated with extraordinary power, was the stigmatization of St Francis, a subject at which fools mock and on which wise men deeply ponder. The crucified Seraph fills the air above with a light that reveals the mystery by which man is won to wisdom through suffering and love. Beneath the wooded rocks of Alverno kneels the humble and loving saint, absorbed in contemplation of the Eternal Wisdom crucified, and by His crucifixion reopening the way of man to his Supreme Good. The wounds of the love-burning Seraph dart their fiery rays into the feet, hands and side of God's servant, and in the triumph of the tranquil ecstasy over excruciating pain and sorrow, we see how nature must suffer in having its narrow limits expanded by the sudden receiving of a great en-

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largement through the fire of divine love. Yet is the strain of suffering lost to sense in the ecstatic joy of the celestial communion with the Eternal God. A wonderful knowledge has come with the wonderful gift, not by the cold way of science and ideas, but by the way of Wisdom, in which the light comes forth to the mind from the good implanted in the heart.

“Beneath this realization of God’s divine communication to His humble servant, the artist with a profound instinct has symbolized the mockery with which puny minds inflated with conceit greet the great mysteries of God. Beneath a broken fragment of the towering rocks squats an inflated toad, peering up with its keen eyes to a white butterfly that hovers above the stone with expanded wings, and is exerting some rayless, magic influence upon the unpleasant creature that peers up with inflated conceit from below. Placed elsewhere this incident would only raise a smile; but in its obvious relation with the mystery of divine communication above it rises in significance to the awful and the terrible. You think of Satan aping the Angel of Light, and of his victim aping illumination. You see the sophist with his butterfly light, working out his travesty of the works of God’s eternal wisdom, yet reaching no higher than the images of his brain, or the small things that come within the scope of his senses. And one is reminded of the saying of a profound mystic that the Wisdom of God is the scourge of fools.”

“It was a striking thought of the nature-loving Fathers to describe man as the goal of creation. Without man there would be no eye to feast on the wisdom of God revealed in the beauty of nature. What would the lovely landscape avail with-

out the eye of man? Of what use is the softest silver-sweet music but to charm the ear of man? In man the purpose of nature attains its zenith. He can reflect on the thoughts of creative reason and see and feel God's majesty and beauty. . . . Theology, though dependent on revelation, is still a progressive science, especially when it allies itself to profane knowledge, and strives to harmonize faith with reason. But even here the present is upborne on the shoulders of the past; nay, more, in principle it has not advanced a single pace. As Plato and Aristotle are the Goliaths of heathen wisdom, so SS. Augustine and Thomas are the unsurpassed coryphi of Christian philosophy. Nevertheless, the Christian philosophy will not despise or be indifferent to the teaching of modern science. The immense progress made by the exact sciences has laid a deeper and surer foundation for intellectual science, and has also given a better insight into the works of nature and the human mind. Man's knowledge will always be a piece of patchwork. Still, in spite of its numerous shortcomings, it is ever drawing nearer to its final purpose and end. Neither telescope, microscope nor spectroscope, neither chemical analysis nor experimental physics will ever wholly satisfy the desire ingrained in man's nature to know the cause. Reason, however enlightened it may be, cannot unravel the riddle of the universe without the aid of faith."\*

The scheme of salvation which Mr Harrison tells us no one can conceive growing up with anything but a geocentric system of thought, has had a strange fascination for mankind in every age since it began, not less since the reform of science than before.

\* Schanz, vol. I.

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If, then, I may presume that, with the assistance of St Augustine and other men of might, the madman has been knocked down to conform to Dr Johnson's advice, I ought to try and conclude in a tone of pity—pity for him who has no pity for himself. This is Christian. For Christ had pity upon us before we turned from sin. He whom Mr Harrison has named the Anthropomorphic Creator embodied fraternal pity in His law, and made it a condition of Christian hope; and He Himself fulfilled this Christian pity with His dying lips upon the Cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." If Mr Harrison should ever turn his soul to Christian theology and philosophy, he need not fear that he will have to adopt a geocentric system of thought; his own words will inevitably cause him more pain than the most relentless enemies could wish to inflict. In such an event he need not despair, for he that shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him. May then the hour come when Mr Harrison will humble his intellect to the mystery of divine Love, and not refuse his share, which has been bought at so great a price in that atonement and celestial resurrection which he now regards as a contemptible myth!

### XIII—Strictures on Hutton's Life of Cardinal Newman

**T**HIS Paper is concerned with the life and writings of Cardinal Newman only so far as they pass under the censorship of his Protestant critic, the late Mr Richard H. Hutton, in his Memoir of the Cardinal. The microscope and magnifying glass are not being applied to the beautiful flower itself, but to the interesting butterfly which has settled itself upon it. And Mr Hutton has a special claim upon the interests of Catholics, because he has such a great veneration for the character and enthusiastic admiration for the writings of Cardinal Newman. He not unfrequently defended the Catholic position in the pages of *The Spectator*, of which he was the editor, and may be said to have fought, shoulder to shoulder, with Catholics against Agnosticism and infidelity generally, while, at the same time, he was a respected and influential exponent of Anglicanism.

On page 2 of the Memoir Mr Hutton strikes the keynote of all his difference with the Cardinal. "I cannot," he says, "adopt for myself his later conception of the Church of Christ, hardly even that earlier conception which led so inevitably to the later." On page 5 we read, "He [the Cardinal] has treated the difficulties of faith in his own way, and I cannot but think, in relation to that considerable class of them for the treatment of which he relies absolutely on the autho-



city of the Church, in a very unsatisfactory way." These two statements form a plain sequence. Hutton cannot accept Newman's idea of the Church. He does not believe in the existence of a divinely established and guaranteed tribunal of religious truth on earth; therefore, of course, all argument which rests on the existence of the Church as a suppositum is to him very unsatisfactory.

Dissenting from Newman then in the view that dogma is of the essence of religion, Mr Hutton tells us, page 26, "The real danger is that the pains taken to understand and avail themselves of theological safeguards against error, shall supersede in men's minds, the habit of gazing steadily at the fullness of the divine character, as gradually unveiled to them; though the diffusion of this habit is the end and aim of Hebrew prophecy, and the purpose of Christ's life, death and resurrection." "Dogma," says Hutton, "is analysis and inference, and necessarily inadequate analysis and inference." If this is what he means by dogma, he is not likely to agree with Newman, because they are speaking of totally different things. The dogma Newman is speaking about is a categorical enunciation, demanding assent to a theological truth very different from Mr Hutton's dogma, inadequate analysis and inference. In his *Grammar of Assent* Cardinal Newman devotes some pages to the Athanasian Creed. That creed, certainly, could not be described as analysis and inference. It is a royal proclamation of eternal truth. The Cardinal says, page 133, "It is a psalm of praise, of confession and of profound self-prostrating homage, parallel to the canticles of the elect in the Apocalypse. It appeals to the imagi-

nation quite as much as to the intellect. It is the war-song of faith, with which we warn first ourselves, then each other, and then all those who are within its hearing, and the hearing of the truth, who our God is and how we must worship Him, and how vast our responsibility will be if we know what to believe and yet believe not. For myself I have ever felt it as the most simple and sublime, the most devotional formulary to which Christianity has given birth, more so even than the *Veni Creator* and the *Te Deum*." Dogma even in its simplest utterance, cannot be said to be barren of spiritual nutriment, though it may be too concentrated to move the devotion of some minds. However, Mr Hutton, by defining what he means by dogma, gives the key to all his difference with the Cardinal on this head.

Page 30 of Memoir: "The substance of revelation is the character of God, and dogma is only necessary to those whose minds cannot enter into the marvellous revelation of the character of God and of His love for man, without asking a hundred questions to which, in our present state, only a very imperfect and unsatisfactory answer can be given."

Same page: "For the predominantly intellectual dogmatic theology is a noble study, especially if it is so pursued as to remind them that the most it can effect is to point out the path of least resistance for the understanding, that is, coupled with a Christian heart and soul, and the much greater difficulties into which the understanding must plunge if it passes into an heretical region of thought. Theology, no doubt, is to some extent truly described as a line of escape which passes between the devil and the deep sea."

This language is very natural in one who did not believe in the infallible nature of dogma, and in the moral obligation to accept it apart from the power to understand it. He seems not to have seen that Catholics, in accepting the dogmatic teaching of the Church, do so, as the worship of God by faith, the primary fulfilment of the first commandment. Heresy with him would seem to be only a more or less serious error of judgement, not the immorality of disobedience to Divine Authority.

Page 50: "It is perfectly true, I think, that he regarded an authoritative Church as at least as important an element in revelation as a clearly defined doctrine, and that, so far as I can judge, he never gave that pre-eminence to the gradual unveiling of the character of God as the main subject-matter of revelation, which could alone, I suppose, hold sufficiently in check the tendency to exalt and magnify the function of the priesthood."

Same page: "He thought as much, I suppose, of the effect in the direction of humility, for example, which the habit of confession and the ordinance of absolution would produce on the human character, as he thought of the effect, in the same direction, which the constant study of Christ's character would produce for him and his colleagues. Revelation meant not merely, perhaps not chiefly, the unveiling of the divine character and personality, but the totality of the results to be produced by all the new agencies which Christianity set in motion, and, of course, he regarded an authoritative Church as far the most important. To him the Church, instead of being merely the great organization which handed down to future generations the original testimony to

Christ, and which strove to embody His teaching in actual practice, was in the first instance the depository of the sacraments which Christ instituted, and became through their instrumentality the only agency competent to impress adequately on the soul those regenerate habits of mind, which could alone make that testimony effectual."

Mr Hutton, in common with all outside the Catholic Church, was suspicious of forms and sacerdotalism. Formalism is a reproach which savours of a charge of hypocrisy difficult to substantiate and correspondingly difficult to refute. It is hard to see how institutions, spiritual or otherwise, could be established for the general and perpetual use of mankind without forms. The constant use of forms tends to become perfunctory, but the abuse is no argument against the use. The alternative condition of mind is exemplified in Mr Hutton himself. He takes refuge from formalism in the vague though pious phrase, "the unveiling of the character and person of God." Doubtless in Mr Hutton these words express a genuine loyalty and love of Christ, but to the multitude it would be a lifeless abstraction. To resuscitate the soul dead in sin there is needed a great miracle of sorrow and tears, a loud voice in the heart, "Lazarus, come forth"; to effect this are priests and sacraments ordained. Who would lay his hand on the Prodigal's shoulder, and say, "What mean these tears, this confession, 'Father, I have sinned'; this communion, 'Let us feast and rejoice, for his my son was dead and is come to life again'? Be content, poor prodigal, to contemplate from the pigsty in the far country the noble character of your Father, for that is all that is required to restore you to His love."

Did Mr Hutton think that Cardinal Newman's view of Church and priest and sacraments is peculiar to him and his colleagues, and not the constant teaching of the Catholic Church from the beginning? Priest and sacrament bring Christ's atonement within reach of each individual, so that when the heart is full he can cast himself at the feet of Christ and hear the words, "Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee." They fulfil the promise, "Behold, I am with you always even to the consummation of the world." How long would Christianity have lived but for priest and sacrament? Where would it have been long ages before this if it had been confined to the vague commission to unveil the character of God? Christianity is a strenuous discipline and regimen of heart and intellect, of soul and body, beginning with baptism and completed in holy communion. A Christianity without a visible head on earth, intolerant of dogma and sacraments, resentful of compulsory discipline, becomes attenuated into a mere pious philosophy, devoid of supernatural strength to enable it to fight against hell-born pride and the earth-born giants materialism and rationalism. Mr Hutton himself made good fight against them, but only in alliance with the Catholic Church.

A radical error of Mr Hutton and his colleagues is that they look for the solution of what must be always more or less mysterious in this life, viz., the malice of sin, not to the majesty, sanctity and other infinite perfections of God, but to the appreciable injury by sin to the individual sinner and to society at large; and consequently the incidence of the divine atonement falls not so much on the outraged majesty and sanctity



of God as on the amelioration of the moral disorders of mankind. The malice of heresy as of other immoralities will, therefore, be estimated merely in proportion to its apparent injury to the heretic and to society. This attitude towards sin vitiates their apprehension of the full meaning of the Incarnation, the atonement and the mission of the Church. Thus to Mr Hutton Christianity is the unveiling of the character of God, and the mission of the Church is simply to hand down to successive generations a sublime philosophy. His mind would revolt from the idea that the mission of the Church is to do more than the work of Hercules in the Augean stables till the end of time. Yet so it is; whatever else it may be, her mission is to cleanse the soul of sin by turning the rivers of Christ's Blood into every soul by baptism and penance.

Mr Hutton's Christianity reminds one of the error of quietism. His ideal Christian is a contemplative, with as little as possible of dogmatic faith. He recognizes an organization of some kind ordained by Christ to perpetuate Christianity, but it is an invertebrate organism, if not the unsightly victim of craniotomy. Its priests and sacraments are, at best, only human expedients and, like medicine, to be used only on invalids, and simply injurious to the thoroughly healthy Christian. Of course he was unable to accept the Cardinal's conclusions in his *Essay on Development*. He considered it, however, an evidence of great genius—an extraordinary anticipation in religious thought of the principles which Darwin afterwards worked out in biology. The essay in question was the genuine digest of the Cardinal's mind during the throes of long agony in his con-

version to the Catholic Church. But I do not think he would lay claim to be the original discoverer of the principle of development in religious doctrine, though he displays all his genius in applying it to the perplexities of Puseyism by distinguishing between that development which is life and that development which is decay. Hutton thus expresses his dissent: "Newman makes the suspicion, distrust and almost disgust with which what he regards as the true Christianity was viewed to be one of the main notes of the Church, and if that be so the better the Roman Catholics are treated, the less conspicuous, according to this passage, will be the note of authenticity in the Roman Catholic Church. In a world which humbles itself before such men as Father Damien, the apostle martyr who gave up his life for the lepers of the Sandwich Islands, this note of the Church on which Newman insists so emphatically can hardly be called conspicuous." Mr Hutton might have remembered this note was unmistakably foretold by our Lord, "If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but, because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I have said to you, the servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."\* It did not make the world's hatred of our Lord less marked because at one time the people wished to make Him King. The Hosannas of Palm Sunday emphasize the mockeries of Good Friday. Mr Hutton venerated Cardinal Newman and delighted in his writings, but that only throws into stronger relief his repugnance to many

\* John xv, 19, 20.

characteristics of the Roman Catholic Church. The enthusiasm for Father Damien's heroic work does not make the Church more loved by the world. Some, by making him out to be an isolated example of heroic charity, have contrasted his work with what they consider the inert indifference of the Catholic Church in general. Others, again, have been so jealous of his repute as to imagine and proclaim him an immoral hypocrite. Individuals, from natural generosity, consent to honour him in spite of his creed; but, to those who are within the Church, the note of the world's hatred remains as evident as ever. Mr Hutton unconsciously implies the existence of this note by the very form of his own expression, "the better Roman Catholics are treated." They are always being treated by the world, i.e., more or less ill-treated, and that treatment is the note of the true Church. Catholics are permitted to share with the brute creation in the benefit of that universal philanthropy and spirit of toleration which is a growing characteristic of mankind, but the world can never love the Church of Christ.

"I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me." "The world hateth them, because they are not of the world, as I also am not of the world."

To Cardinal Newman's conclusion in reviewing the fourth century of Church history, that the uncompromising attitude towards heresy is one of her unfailing notes, Mr Hutton remarks, "There again I should say that the Roman Catholic Church of Pius IX is much better described than the Roman Catholic Church of Leo XIII. Neither does the Church of Leo XIII denounce external

\* John xvii, 9, 14.

heresy with anything like the same verve as the Church of Pio IX; nor do the Christian Churches outside the pale of the Papal Church denounce the Papal Church with anything like the same vivacity. Indeed there is something like an *entente cordiale* between the Roman Catholic Church of to-day and various other Churches—an alliance against scepticism." Mr Hutton does not attempt to reconcile these two policies. But are they necessarily inconsistent with each other? It is Christ-like to discriminate between sin and the sinner. Intolerance for sin, mercy for the sinner. First to anathematize the heresy, and then with tenderest compassion to draw the sinner. Leo's recognition of the great good in heretics is not inconsistent with Pio's anathemas of heresy. The same Divine lips pronounced these two sentences: "He that is not with Me, is against Me"—that is, Divine Truth cannot compromise with error; and, "He that is not against you, is for you"—that is, do not "quench the smoking flax or break the bruised reed," foster and encourage that which is good in every one.

The character of the two Pontiffs was doubtless suited to their parts, but they were both doing the work of the same Divine Master. "Hæc autem omnia operatur unus atque idem Spiritus." Against the summary of the fifth and sixth centuries concluding in these words, "That amid its disorders and fears, there is but one voice for whose decisions its people wait with truth, one name, and one see, to which they look with hope, and that name, Peter, and that see Rome; such a religion is not unlike the Christianity of the fourth and sixth centuries," Mr Hutton asks, "Is not this equivalent to making partial and local degeneracy

of the Church, when it occurs without derogating from the authority of the central see, one of the notes of the Church?" Can Mr Hutton suppose that Cardinal Newman thought that chronic tendency to degenerate is a note of the Church? It is a note of fallen humanity. But the co-existence of a perennial fount of regeneracy acknowledged even by the degenerate, and ever actively efficacious, is indeed a most supernatural note. In reference to the Church's power to assimilate and transform alien material, Mr Hutton thinks the Church open to the charge of compromise rather than triumph, in having avowedly, so he says, adopted pagan externals. The honour shewn to relics and saints' festivals is his example of this, which he calls, "the most disputable of the positions of the Roman Catholic Church."

On what lines Mr Hutton would have tried to make good this serious charge I do not know, but the present phase of Anglican Protestantism, in which the only really religious movement is return to Roman Catholic devotions and discipline, strongly suggests that the verdict is so far in favour of the Church's religious practices. But where can such objections as these have an end? Cardinal Newman discusses Ecclesiastical history on the assumption of there being an infallible Church on earth. Hutton protests on the ground that there is no such thing. Obviously the difference must be endless. His objections have sometimes the inconsistency and indefiniteness of scruples. Witness his objection to Newman's position, that the orthodoxy of hyperdulia and dulia (the subordinate kind of homage) is a logical inference from the Church's anathema on latria (adoration proper) of created beings of any kind. "Surely," he



says, "the real danger of the immense development which the Roman Catholic Church has given to the intercession of the Virgin Mary and Saints, is that it tends to present to us the wills of beings, who in knowledge and limitations are like ourselves, and who are supposed (at least by ignorant people) to be more influenced by our pertinacity of entreaty than God would be, as likely to urge upon God what He would otherwise refuse to do, and to try and impose upon Him by their entreaties their weaker forms of good will. Whereas what ought to be impressed upon the ignorant is that the more completely any finite being has conformed himself to the will of God, the more resolutely would he refuse to intercede for any favour not intrinsically in harmony with the Divine Providence. This *petitio principii* has the character of a morbid scruple. Mr Hutton has tried to impress upon us that Christianity is the unveiling of the character of God, but these kinds of scruples show us the danger to which a soul is exposed which is unsupported by the dogmatic teaching of an infallible Church. Christ and His Church teach us that God is a Father to us—the tenderest of Fathers from whom all Paternity in heaven and earth is named, and that His desire is that His children should love each other as He has loved us, i.e. intercede and supply for one another as much as possible, in imitation and in union with the supreme intercession and atonement of the Father's only begotten Son. Thus we see that St Paul is constantly interceding for others and asking their prayers for himself. Mr Hutton's principle of non-intervention with the divine will seems to strike at the root of all intercessory and even supplicatory prayer and would lead at last

to the outer darkness of Calvinistic fatalism. Can this be the result of gazing steadfastly at the fullness of the divine character?

"What is the value," asks Mr Hutton, "of the *Essay on Development* for the world at large? I think it has done," he replies, "a great deal towards showing that many of the latter developments of the original teaching of Christ and His Apostles are the genuine and natural outcome of the supernatural teaching given to the Primitive Church; but that none the less, the disposition to assert, on the part of one branch of the Church, too high a claim for its own infallibility and certainty of Providential guidance has always been visible." From this it would appear as though Mr Hutton believed the Christian Church to consist of branches, each with its own degree of infallibility, and that one infallibility might clash with another infallibility; divinely constituted federation of infallibilities, such was the punishment inflicted on the builders of the Tower of Babel. He devotes a page or two to the parallel of Samaria to the Anglican Church, a theory abandoned by the Tractarians as untenable, inasmuch as the Jewish Church was not established to be universal, and Samaria was unable to prove its claim to Jewish privileges. "Just as Elijah," says Hutton, "was taught that God had not deserted the Church of Samaria in spite of their schism and idolatry, so God has not abandoned Churches which Rome treats with contempt." God did not establish the Church of Samaria any more than He has established Protestantism, but His grace is constantly working in the souls of material heretics. However, Hutton concludes, "I sincerely believe that Newman has shewn that many of the practices

which were thought mere superstitions in the Roman Catholic worship are natural developments of the belief of the Primitive Church, and not in the least inconsistent with the pure rapture of the Primitive worship."

He ends his remarks on the Development by quoting verbatim and with enthusiastic eulogy the concluding pathetic appeal of Newman to his Anglican friends to reconsider their position in the light of what he has written. Hutton praises the Roman Catholic Church, but with marked discrimination. "Is there," Mr Hutton asks, "truer Christianity anywhere than in the Church of Rome, in spite of the almost greedy traditionalism with which her most famous teachers seize upon doubtful and legendary elements of pious rumour in bygone times to feed the appetite of her contemplative orders?"

Could you imagine a newspaper reporter hospitably conducted over some gentleman's residence and devoting his special attention to pictures and picture books he found in the nursery, and then reporting "that the gentleman's judgement and taste in art and literature were extraordinarily crude and mythical for one in his social position." We should, at least, conjecture that the reporter has never had any children to care for of his own. The Church has had to nurse and feed the children of men in every age and country for 2,000 years. She is not so puritanical as to care to eliminate every exaggeration of child-like enthusiasm from private practice and devotion. The poet's imagination has been allowed to picture the mysteries of faith and scenes of Gospel history, and the artist has followed the poet, and private and popular devotion has followed poet and painter,

while the Church watches her children and draws them away when there is danger of real injury. Has the Anglican Church ever had the care of children? Neither does the Church direct every domestic arrangement of her family with an eye to controversy. She has not universal compulsory conscription, though she must be on earth a Church militant.

Hutton considers that the great motive of Newman's change from the Anglican to the Roman Church was the conviction that his doctrine of detachment and mortification, as essential to the ideal Christian life, was not the teaching of the Church of England. But he does not refer to the concomitant conviction that gradually impressed itself on his mind that the Anglican ministry was of human not divine institution. Therefore, amongst the several beautiful examples of sermons preached at St Mary's, Oxford, he does not mention "The Gainsaying of Core," in which the judgement of God on a self-appointed priesthood is powerfully described. Few persons could be more familiar with everything the Cardinal wrote than Mr Hutton, and no one could have a higher appreciation of them from a literary point of view. He says, "I do not know that he ever again displayed quite the same intensity of restrained and subdued passion as found expression in many of his Oxford Sermons. But in irony, in humour, in eloquence, in imaginative force, the writings of the later, and as we may call it, the emancipated portion of his career, far surpass the writings of his theological apprenticeship."

Of *Loss and Gain*, he said, "The book has been a great favourite with me, almost ever since its first publication, partly from the admirable fidelity

with which it sketches young men's thoughts and difficulties, partly for its happy irony, partly from its perfect representation of the academical life and tone at Oxford." Of the description of Reding's mother taking leave of him, when he announces that he is going to join the Roman Catholic Church, he says, "Except in *Callista* Newman has written nothing in the form of fiction more touching than this passage." In the Sermons addressed to "Mixed Congregations" he discovers the enthusiasm of a convert, and that they contain the most eloquent and elaborate specimens of his eloquence as a preacher. He quotes the awfully dramatic judgement of the worldly man from "Neglect of Divine Calls and Warnings." He quotes also from "The Mental Sufferings of our Lord" with some slight demur. "Certainly," he says, "no one could ever have gathered from the Gospels or Epistles that all this infinitude of anguish, quite alien to the special agony of the situation, and gathered out of all lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and from all forms and phases of human transgression, piled itself up in the spirit of our Lord and pressed upon Him during His Passion with the closeness of almost personal remorse." Yet so the Fathers of the Church had analysed the mystery of the Passion, and so Newman unquestioningly accepted it. Whatever he has thought that he "ought" to believe, he has always found the means, not only to believe, but to interpret to himself with a unique vivacity and intensity of conception.

Mr Hutton does not notice the masterpiece of this series, the sermon entitled "The Divine Condescension," which tends to confirm the impression



that those whose faith is not founded on the dogmatic teaching of the infallible Church cannot rise to the full grasp of the mystery of the Incarnation, although they profess to be gazing steadily at the character of God.

Of the two discourses on "The Glories of Mary," he says, "Exquisite, even if too elaborate as compositions, he almost rivalled the passion of Italian and French devotion to the Mother of our Lord, and anticipated the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin some years before it had been defined. I know no passage in Newman which so thoroughly bewilders the Protestant imagination, in its willingness to accept vague tradition of the most distant and uncertain origin, as evidence for historic fact, as that in which he deals with the death of the Mother of Christ." Hutton quotes the whole passage, and then remarks: "But what is to ordinary minds marvellous in this passage, is the apparent acquiescence of so great a thinker as Newman in the doctrine that 'the mind of the Church' is not only empowered to develop doctrine, but to collect minor historic facts of which it had no evidence apparently, and this on no better ground than that such facts would not be unwelcome to it, if the evidence were forthcoming. How can Newman say that a good Catholic 'ought' to believe a fact of this kind, not even a dogmatic fact?"

It would indeed be wonderful if Mr Hutton had believed in the bodily Assumption of our Lady, because it would have shown that he fully realized the mystery of the Incarnation. If you see a broad river pursuing its course for many miles, you know that it is not a temporary effect of inundation. And if, on trying to trace it to its source,

you lose sight of it amongst the rocks and under-wood and, on exploring all the country round, you find that there is only one adequate watershed from which it could be supplied, you may be reasonably certain that you have discovered the true source of the river. For many ages belief in the bodily Assumption of our Lady has been universal in the Church, and although the continuity of the tradition is not traceable in the early centuries, there is no contradictory or inconsistent tradition; the pious Catholic who realizes the unique holiness of that body in which the Son of God became Incarnate, has sufficient reason for believing that it is a genuine tradition. Such a certainty is the result of a combination of intense congruity with a filial trust in God's guidance of His Church, acting on minds predisposed to believe. Mr Hutton, though he was unable to believe, might have discovered the principles on which this kind of certainty is held to be legitimate in the *Grammar of Assent*, "which work," he says, "is a long plea for cautious and deliberate though courageous reasoning on all the various converging lines of consideration which bear on the Christian revelation." "To me," says Hutton, "this, the bodily Assumption, is just the most suspicious of all the aspects of Roman Catholicism, that the Church shows such avidity in accepting as facts, devotional dreams of apparently very late and ambiguous origin." In another place, "What seems to me the greatest of all objections to the Roman Catholic Church, the indifference she shows to reasonable criticism, even in her most solemn acts, such as the sanction given to utterly unhistorical facts in the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and the sanction given to the

doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures in the decrees of the Council of Trent, and subsequently of the Council of the Vatican."

Mr Hutton has a word of criticism for all and each of the Cardinal's publications. He leaves to the last his appreciation of *Callista* and *The Dream of Gerontius*, perhaps because for them he has to bestow only the most exalted praise. Of *Callista* he says, "The little work which seems to me the most perfect and singular in spiritual beauty, except perhaps *The Dream of Gerontius*." To me *Callista* has always seemed the most completely characteristic of Newman's books. Many of them express with greater power his intellectual delicacy of insight and his moral intensity, but none, unless it be *The Dream of Gerontius*, expresses as this does the depth of his spiritual passion, the singular wholeness, unity and steady concentration of purpose connecting all his thoughts, words and deeds."

Of *The Dream of Gerontius* he speaks as one of the most unique and original of the poems of the present century, indeed the most completely independent of zeitgeist, . . . it manages to give us in many respects a more adequate impression of the true core of Newman's faith and life than any other of his works. None of his writings engrave more vividly on his readers the significance of the intensely practical convictions which have shaped his career. And especially it impresses on us one of the greatest secrets of his influence. For Newman has been a sign to this generation, that unless there is a great deal of the loneliness of death in life there can hardly be much of the higher equanimity of life in death. To my mind, *The Dream of Gerontius* is the poem of a man to

whom the vision of the Christian revelation has at all times been more real, more potent to influence action and more powerful to preoccupy the imagination than all worldly interests put together—of a man whose whole horizon has been so taken up by revealed religion that his career embodies a statuesque unity and fixity of purpose standing out against our confused modern world of highly complex and often extremely petty interests, like a lighthouse shining against blurred and lowering masses of town and shore and harbour and sea and sky. *The Dream of Gerontius*, though an imaginative account of a Catholic death, touches all the beliefs and hopes which had been the mainstay of Newman's life, and the chief subjects of his waking thoughts and most vivid impressions. It is impossible to read it without recognizing especially that Newman had always steadily conceived life as a divine gift held absolutely at God's will, not only in regard to its duration, but also in regard to the mode and conditions of its tenure." After a long extract he says, "Surely in all literature there has been no more effective effort to realize the separation of soul and body, and the thoughts which might possess a soul separated from the body, than this." He concludes, "*The Dream of Gerontius* seems to me to contain the happiest summary we could have of the ideal which has pervaded and constituted the significance of the remarkable life I have been trying to review—a life that has fed itself from beginning to end on the substance of divine revelation, and that has measured the whole length and breadth and depth of human doubt without fascination and without dread—a life at once both severe and tender, but passionate and self-con-

trolled, with more in it perhaps of an ascetic love of suffering than actual suffering, more of mortification than of unhappiness, more of sensibility and sensitiveness than of actual anguish, but still a lonely and severe and saintly life. No life known to me in the last century of our national history can for a moment compare with it, so far as we can judge of such deep matters in unity of meaning and consistency of purpose. It has been carved, as it were, out of one solid block of spiritual substance, and though there may be weak and wavering lines here and there in the carving, it is not easy to detect any flaw in the material upon which the long indefatigable labour has been spent."

It need only to be said, in conclusion, that if Mr Hutton, in his sketch of Cardinal Newman's life, has minimized his own Catholic leanings and emphasized his differences with the Roman Catholic Church, it was only natural to do so when endeavouring to enlist the interest of the English Protestant public. Nevertheless, it makes one sadly realize the insuperable character of Protestant prejudice when we find it so irrepressible in a mind so religious, so enlightened and so sympathetic as that of Mr Hutton when writing a memoir which is in some respects a panegyric of Cardinal Newman. In spite of his profound reverence and admiration there runs throughout his review not a mere thread but a broad vein of anti-Catholic protest.

It must be now nearly two years since Mr Hutton himself passed away for ever from the discordant voices of Anglicanism to the world where he knows even as he is known. Would there were many amongst religious Anglicans as conscientious and fair-minded towards Catholics as Mr Hutton was in spite of his antipathies.



## XIV—My Perplexities as to the Evolution of Adam's Body by Generation

**T**HE late Professor Mivart concluded a short letter on the Origin of Man in *The Tablet* of December 26, 1897 or 1898, in these words: "But how can we adequately characterize one which [i.e. a criticism which] should declare that God created man's body directly and instantaneously, and made a belief in that mode of creation a condition of salvation, and yet had so formed it as to make every region of that body teem with the evidence that it had been evolved through ages of corporeal evolution?"

Some one in malice or mischief seems to have whispered in the ear of the Professor that a door might possibly be closed against the theory that Adam's body was evolved by generation. The very idea is intolerable to him, and he retaliates by slamming the door of natural science against any alternative mode of formation. So transparently evident is it to the Professor that the process by which God created the human body was evolution through ages of corporeal generation that to him it is worse than folly to doubt it. I suppose it savours of blasphemy, implying that God could contradict Himself, so large has He written evolution on the human body. This age and particularly this country is addicted to the open-door policy, especially in politics, natural science and religion. As Catholics, of course, we gladly submit to the door being shut on religious

subjects, when shut by an authority which we know to be divinely established and enlightened, but we naturally demand very clear reasons for the closing of a door by any less authority. Are the reasons for believing in the generation of Adam's body sufficiently clear to justify the professor's anathema against any other theory?

As I understand it, evolution is an automatic process, a natural selection by the survival of the fittest, that is the best adapted to physical surroundings; not the perfect absolutely, but only the more perfect relatively to circumstances. For example, in the ape species, the action of this law would tend to intensify all the specific characteristics of the ape. The refined, sensitive ape would fall out in the evolution march. The strongest, most agile and most hardy would be selected. The ape that could climb best, fight best, had the thickest hair and skull and the strongest teeth, would naturally survive as the best equipped for the exigencies of ape life. As thus stated, evolution would not tend towards the selection of the ideal human body, which is, though absolutely more perfect, relatively to ape surroundings most unfit. But it has been suggested that, for the purpose of attaining to Adam's body, this process of selection has been crossed and modified by a concomitant development and selection going on in the ape nature divergent and elevating, viz., the development of the animal instinct, which became, generation after generation, more and more intelligent, raising in the course of ages the ape nature above his circumstances and so refining and ennobling his body, until at last the ideal human body was selected. This super-selection process must have been divinely directed

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and supported, as it would be an innovation upon the natural course of selection which is essentially confined to adaptation to actual circumstances and could not naturally rise above them. This is a gratuitous assumption for the set purpose of subjecting Adam's body to the law of evolution.

However, supposing the body of Adam to have been evolved in this supernatural way, although most perfect, it would only be *primus inter pares*. The father and mother would be worthy progenitors of Adam's body. Doubtless there would be brothers and sisters approximately perfect in organism, besides uncles, aunts and cousins to the furthest degrees of kinship. Then Adam's body is chosen to receive the sublime gift—the first rational soul, raising him at once immeasurably above all other earthly creatures, with a capacity for supernatural grace which would make him a little less than the angels, enlisting him in the same divine service, subjecting him to the same ordeal, the choice of good or evil entailing an eternal destiny of weal or woe, and investing him with a special prerogative of absolute sovereignty, with incontestable inalienable right of life and death over all other creatures on earth.

Was this marvellous supremacy recognized and humbly acknowledged by Adam's father, mother, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and cousins? Did they all in some inarticulate form pledge their allegiance to him? Did this great chosen nation, in all things like to men except in speech and reason, form Adam's court, his retinue, his faithful servants, his standing army? Well they might! But how is it that history is silent about this human race since it produced Adam? No geological

stratum has record of it. Or was it of them that came the daughters of men who fascinated the sons of God and gave birth to the race of giants who were drowned in the universal deluge? Or did they incur the anger of Adam by rebellion against his authority, and, in the plenitude of his prerogative, did Adam obliterate his natural relations, cremating them all, even to the furthest infant cousin, no one escaping to tell the tale? "Out-Heroding Herod!" you exclaim. But no; Adam could not become a patricide or a cannibal, to however base a use he might subject his father. To this loathsome entanglement I am brought by my ignorance.

Another difficulty to me is that, if Adam's soul was infused at the time of his conception, then in very deed, was he compared to the senseless brutes and made like unto them. He was suckled, nurtured and educated by them. If, on the other hand, the soul was infused into Adam when his body had arrived at perfect maturity, then must a most perfect animal spirit have been ejected from its birth-right to make way for the rational soul and, like the hermit crab in the whelk, that soul would only be a tenant of a brute body built by the previous tenant, with fixity of tenure for life, but not, in any sense, its formative principle. The specific twin powers of the human soul, reason and speech, require for their exercise special organs. How were such organs evolved? Not by the gradual efforts of the brute spirit, for the animal spirit has no capacity for such powers. A brute spirit infused into a human body would be unable to use the powers of reason and speech; so a human soul infused into a brute body would be a dumb idiot for lack of the organs of reason and speech.

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My next perplexity is of a moral kind. Every body, brute or human, necessarily brings with it at birth an inheritance of proclivities. In human beings these are moral proclivities, good and bad. In the brutes they are not moral, because, though gifted with an intelligent will, the brute has not a conscience or moral intelligence. Now, it does not seem consistent with what we believe to have been the perfect integrity of Adam's nature, that his body should have been heir to the proclivities of brute nature. The task of holding his animal body in due subordination to reason has proved too much for him as it is. What would it have been if that body had been heir to the passions and propensities of a countless number of brute ancestry? Adam's nature was corrupted by his own sin, not by the blood of brutes flowing in his veins. It was not the reassertion of an old ancestral ape instinct that made him eat the forbidden fruit, but wilful disregard of the command of God.

But it will be unfair to evade the reason which the professor gives for his faith, namely, that every region of the human body teems with evidence that it has been evolved by generation. What sort of evidence is this? Not positive evidence, but circumstantial. A kind of evidence that may attain to very great cumulative force, sufficient, by itself, to support a working hypothesis, but which never can lose its tentative character, its porous and friable nature, always liable to modification, even to complete neutralization, from collateral or counter evidence supplied by other sciences, as in this case by psychology and theology. If, says the evolutionist, Adam's body was not evolved by generation, why should it be made so uniformly like to other bodies? Why, above all, should it



have that formation which proclaims it to have been taken from a womb? In reply, I should say that, although Infinite Power and Wisdom could have made the human body entirely unlike any other created body, if its life is not only to be intellectual and spiritual but also vegetative and sensitive, it must have organs corresponding to those conditions of life; and when we think of the position man was appointed to hold on earth, that he was to dominate the brute creation, to train it for his service and use it even for his food, to be its king and, as some have said, its priest before God, it was very congruous that he should be given great sympathies with the brute creation through the similarity of his physical form and habit of life, but to go further than this and give him blood relationship would be to create a moral impediment to the full and free exercise of his royal supremacy. Even so, persists the objector, why create him with the apparent link of connexion with a mother when he had no mother? A sufficient reason for this would be that Adam was created in order to initiate a progressive line of beings, of which he was to be the physical mould and model. He had, therefore, to be given, for the sake of his progeny, organisms not necessary in every particular for his own personal well-being. As to organisms said to be obsolete in man but active in brutes, we may well suppose them to have been active in Adam at some stage of his formation, and in his descendants at some period between conception and birth. An early reviewer of Darwin remarks that morphological similarity need be no greater proof of identity of descent than morphological similarity of crystallization in minerals need prove identity of their

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constituent elements. "If at one period of our existence we resembled worms, it is no reason that we were once worms."\* On which side lies the *onus probandi*? On your side, says the evolutionist. Only a womb can produce a human body, therefore Adam's body was made in a womb. We reply, except the body of the first man, for the sufficient reason that there was no human womb to produce him, therefore the hand of God produced the body of the first man. It is the same as the dispute about the origin of life. Whence was protoplasm? You say chemical combinations, but you have to own that you can't produce protoplasm by any chemical combinations. There again comes in the creative hand, which you spurn because it is outside your science.

It was essential to Adam's position that he should be in the strictest sense *sui generis*. There is a human body at the right hand of God in heaven, adored by the angels, the atoning Victim for the sins of men, and their spiritual food on earth; and not far from it the virginal womb that gave it birth. That adorable Body was the lineal descendant of Adam's body. At its birth brute beasts were present, for He was born in their stable. But He did not come for their sakes or to take upon Him their nature. *Caro factum est*; He took that flesh which is man's only, not common to man with the brute. Even these sacred truths are remotely affected by the question of the origin of Adam's body. It was the sting of the punishment inflicted on Nebuchodonosor that, whereas he had been masquerading as God, he should be forced to submit to the habits of a lower nature than his own.

\* Simpson, *Rambler*, 1860.

It is surprising what a large mass of circumstantial evidence may be put out of court by a single positive evidence to the contrary. When God condescended to become one of Adam's children, the second Adam, the first public miracle He wrought was to change water into wine, which wine teemed with evidence that it had been evolved through ages from the aboriginal grape. It was juice of the grape, or it would not have been good wine. But no grape had ever been pressed for that wine. If the water was to be made wine, it must be made to teem with *prima facie* evidence that it had an origin which in reality it had not. In this case overwhelming circumstantial evidence is entirely neutralized by the positive fact that the wine was made from water by divine *Fiat*.

At the last day, when every human body will be resuscitated, every region of those organisms will teem with evidence that they have been again evolved in the same way as they were evolved at the beginning of their probationary life, whereas all that mass of circumstantial evidence will be neutralized by the positive fact that the divine *Fiat* has renewed their existence *in ictu oculi, in sono tubæ*. This final action of God upon the bodies of men helps us to realize that such may also have been His initial action when He made the body of the first man in the Garden of Paradise. To try and solve the mysteries of biology by the application of a merely physical law such as that of evolution is, to say the least, unscientific. To begin with, life is a metaphysical fact, cognizable to us, it is true, only as it informs material organism, but not, therefore, subject only to physical laws, or to be judged by them alone.

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When natural science shares territory with a sister science, if it is to be true philosophy it must take into its counsels the laws of that other science, otherwise, however learned and painstaking it may be in its scrutiny and registration of physical phenomena, it will be little more than scientific quackery. To concentrate all attention upon the sequence of organic forms, and argue that, because there appears to have been a chain more or less broken and disjointed from the lowest to the highest, therefore there must have been a continuity of life, is inconclusive to those who do not identify life with material organism. The difference between vegetable and animal, and between animal and rational life is an essential difference, not to be accounted for by physical development. Nor is it reassuring to find evolutionists applying their theory of survival of the fittest to the development of revealed doctrine in such a way as to make it possible that what has once been held as of faith may in lapse of ages come to be displaced by their contradictions, and that, by accommodation to circumstances, even the pains of hell come within measurable distance of the joys of heaven. A strange fulfilment of the words, *Justitia et Pax osculatæ sunt*.

"In our days," says Aubrey de Vere, "some ethical non-sequitur which would have been detected at once if compendiously stated, escapes confutation, because it is hidden in a work of three volumes. The bulk of the work is on natural philosophy. The reader is grateful for the manifold information it gives him, and unwarily swallows some moral or metaphysical inference, so false that it hardly affects demonstration. It is but implied. Yet the assumption passes for a

proof, because it is surrounded by grave scientific details of unquestionable value.”\*

If restless inquisitiveness still insists that an inquest must be held upon Adam’s body—not, indeed, to find out how he died, but how he came to live—the jury should comprise at least a theologian and a psychologist as well as a natural philosopher, and the theologian has the best claim to be foreman of the jury, because Adam was of God—*fruit Dei*.†

“Whereas,” says Simpson of Darwin, “he has chosen to build on physical arguments a metaphysical conclusion that is subversive of psychology, metaphysics and theology, all these sciences must cover their mouths and wait with resignation the decision of physical science, their new mother and mistress.”‡

In conclusion, I must risk the blame of having too many inverted commas in order to give two extracts from Oliver Wendell Holmes; the first is a triumphant congratulation of Darwinism, the second a pathetic cry of anguish.

“What is the secret of the profound interest which Darwinism has excited in the minds and hearts of more persons than dare to confess their doubts and hopes? It is because it restores nature to its place as a true divine manifestation. It is that it removes the traditional curse from the helpless infant lying in its mother’s arms. It is that it lifts from the shoulders of man the responsibility for the fact of death. It is that, if it is true, woman can no longer be taunted with having brought down on herself the pangs which make her sex a martyrdom. If development upward is the general

\* Preface to *Proteus and Amadeus*,

† Luke iii.

‡ *Rambler*, 1860.



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law of the race, if we have grown by natural evolution out of the cave-man, and even less human forms of life, we have everything to hope from the future. That the question can be discussed without offence shows that we are entering on a new era, a revival greater than that of letters—the revival of humanity.”

*Second Extract.* “What a fearful time is this into which we poor sensitive and timid creatures are born! I suppose the life of every century has more or less special resemblance to that of some particular apostle. I cannot help thinking this century has Thomas for its model. How do you suppose the other apostles felt when that experimental philosopher explored the wounds of the Being who to them was divine, with that inquisitive forefinger? In our time that finger has multiplied itself into ten thousand thousand implements of research, challenging all mysteries, weighing the world as in a balance, and sifting through its prisms and spectroscopes the light that comes from the throne of the Eternal. Pity us, dear Lord, pity us! The peace in believing which belonged to other ages is not for us. Again Thy wounds are opened that we may know whether it is the Blood of one like ourselves which flows from them, or whether it is a Divinity that is bleeding for His creatures. Wilt Thou not take the doubt of Thy children whom the time commands to try all things in the place of the unquestioning faith of earlier and simple-hearted generations? We too have need of Thee. Thy martyrs in other ages were cast into the flames, but no fire could touch their immortal, indestructible faith. We sit in safety and in peace, so far as these poor bodies are concerned; but our cherished beliefs, the hopes, the trust that stayed

the hearts of those we loved who have gone before us, are cast into the fiery furnace of an age which is fast turning to dross the certainties and the sanctities once prized as our most precious inheritance."\*

I think it will be admitted that the triumphant free thought of the first extract justified the pathetic anguish of the second. No Christian dogma is safe outside the Catholic Church. No voice is recognized but that which is called the Voice of Nature, which is practically the wavering voice of human science.

### *Corollaries*

1. Corporeal generation from brutes would involve Adam in the closest blood relationship with them, entailing mutual rights and duties incompatible with Adam's supreme dominion and the brutes' utter servitude.

2. Human morality is so much conditioned by heredity that Adam's probationary career would be heavily weighted by the blood of brutes flowing in his veins.

3. Adam's organic similarity to some brutes not unaccountable on the theory of his being *sui generis*, while, on the contrary, the specific human organisms, such as those of speech and reason, are quite unaccounted for by the law of evolution.

4. Considering Creation not by itself but in connexion with redemption and Resurrection, the isolated origin of the first man would not appear to be an unwarrantable innovation upon the divine plan.

5. If we are not to consider Revelation and Christian Tradition as factors in the solution of

\* *Poet at the Breakfast Table*, 178.

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the problem, "Whence Adam's body?" then the Adam of natural science is a different being from the Adam of the Christian Revelation. He is only the greatest of brutes and the lowest of men; not, as hitherto known, "Adam, the goodliest man, of men unborn."

## XV—Some Characteristics of Non-conformist Christianity

**A**S far back as the writer can well remember, it used to be said that outside the Catholic Church there were two principal currents of religious thought, one towards Catholicity, the other in the direction of infidelity, and that the day would come sooner or later when there would be no possibility of compromise between the two. Fifty years has not yet brought that day. But in the midst of the current towards infidelity there is fortunately a religious sandbank on to which a very large proportion of English-speaking people succeed in scrambling, and there making a Christianity to their liking, under the name of Baptist, Wesleyan, Independent or Unitarian, etc., names which imply some distinctive negation of Catholic doctrine. But, practically, their ideal of Christianity is the same. They agree in denying the existence of one divinely constituted society, under one divinely appointed authority with sacraments and sacrifice, a code of morals and dogmatic belief. They proclaim that they have adopted the only true, unalloyed, original Christianity, which alone is mobile and elastic enough to fit in with the ever-changing and maturing civilization of mankind—Universal Philanthropy or Altruism—each one spending himself and his gifts for the good of humanity, fighting against disease, poverty and ignorance, and by establishing on a permanent foot-

ing sanitation, trade and education, exterminating immorality so far as it effects society, i.e., crime. In this belief they are sincere and pious. They cling to what they believe to be the Person and character of Christ, and to a selection of His Gospel words and maxims. They reject threatening and damnatory words, and cherish all words of mercy and love. They have thus eliminated as they think all that is merely human, and retained all that is divine and elevating to human society. I have been led to this subject by reading Mr W. T. Stead's penny selection of James Russell Lowell's poems. Stead regards Lowell as an apostle and prophet of modern Christianity, and certainly he deserves to be so considered of the sandbank variety. Stead introduces his selection under the title, "His message, and how it helped me." He then quotes from Lowell's preface to the poem called *The Editor's Creed*. Lowell says, "I know of no so responsible position as that of the public journalist; . . . indeed, the position which he holds is that which the clergyman should hold even now. But the clergyman chooses to walk off to the extreme edge of the world, and to throw such seed as he has clear over into the darkness which he calls the next life. As if next did not mean nearest, and as if any life were nearer than that immediately present one which boils and eddies all round him at the caucus, the ratification meeting and the polls! Who taught him to exhort men to prepare for eternity and for some future era of which the present forms no integral part? The furrow which time is even now turning runs through the everlasting, and in that must he plant or nowhere. Yet he would fain believe and teach that we are going to have more of eternity than we have



now. . . . So it comes to pass that the preacher, instead of being a living force, has faded into an emblematic figure at christenings, weddings and funerals. Or if he exercises any other function, it is as keeper and feeder of certain theological dogmas, which, when occasion offers, he unkennels with a 'staboy!' to bark and bite as 'is their nature to,' whence that reproach of odium theologicum has risen. . . ." Such was the Prophet's message, and Stead understood his vocation and became an enthusiastic editor and reviewer of *Reviews*, a high priest of modern Christianity, ordained by Lowell. The first poem selected is called *Extreme Unction*. Mr Stead says, "This poem changed my life. The proffered ministration of the last anointing is declined, not with reverent thanks, but with an agonizing avowal that life has been too much of a muck-raking to be cleansed by holy oil. Then follows deep melancholy retrospection, culminating in heart-breaking despair. . . . The first, third and last stanzas out of eleven will give the character of the poem.

"Go! leave me, Priest; my soul would be  
Alone with the consoler, Death;  
Far sadder eyes than thine will see  
This crumbling clay yield up its breath;  
These shrivelled hands have deeper stains  
Than holy oil can cleanse away.  
Hands that have plucked the world's coarse gains  
As erst they plucked the flowers of May.

"But look! whose shadows block the door?  
Who are those two that stand aloof?  
See on my hands this freshening gore  
Writes o'er again its crimson proof!  
My looked-for deathbed guests are met;  
There my dead youth doth wring its hands;  
And there, with eyes that goad me yet,  
The ghost of my Ideal stands.

"O glorious Youth that once wast mine !  
 O high Ideal ! all in vain  
 Ye enter at this ruined shrine,  
 Whence worship ne'er shall rise again.  
 The bat and owl inhabit here,  
 The snake nests in the altar-stone,  
 The sacred vessels moulder near,  
 The image of the God is gone."

Who can fail to sympathize with and compassionate poor human nature disappointed by life! No one but a mere animal ever fully realized his ideal in this life, least of all the saints of God. But this poem has a distinct object, viz., to impress on us that the life of Altruism is the only life worth living, and therefore to have lived for self is irreparable. It appeals at once to Stead. He selects four lines, of which he says, "I don't think any four lines ever printed went into my life as deeply as these:

"Now here I gasp; what lose my kind,  
 When this fast ebbing breath shall part?  
 What bands of love and service bind  
 This Being to the world's sad heart?"

Now this expresses a merely natural, you may say noble, ambition. It is not genuine Christian charity, without which the tongues of men and angels would be vanity. At best it cannot go beyond distributing all goods to feed the poor and delivering the body to be burned, which lacks something to make it Christian charity. It seems hard to say so, he is so unconscious of it, but his real God is self. He seeks self-satisfaction in earning the approbation of mankind. Tack on to it Gospel maxims, but that gilding will not make it more than good-natured, natural vanity. To become Christian charity, it must spring from the love of God. Messrs Lowell and Stead would protest

against this depreciation, for they lay claim to Christian motive and Christian origin for all their philanthropy. "It was," says Stead, "in harmonizing the broadest humanitarianism with the strictest orthodox theories of the divine mission of Christ that Mr Lowell most helped me. For it enabled me to hitch on all that was best and noblest in human endeavour to the old, old doctrine of Calvary. He has been, and long will be, the most potent preacher of the living Christ that this century has produced. There is no denial of any of the older theories of the Atonement in its supernatural invisible side. There is no questioning of the sacraments. They are all left just where they were. But the test is applied with loving but unsparing severity, 'What are you doing with the least of these my brethren?' This is admirably put in Mr Lowell's *Parable*."

Lowell's *Parable* is this. Christ comes down to earth to see how men are following in His footsteps. He is welcomed with more than royal honours, pomp and splendour. But He is not pleased, because it is all built up upon the neglect of the suffering poor. "I have heard the droppings of their tears these 1800 years."

This impeachment of the Catholic Church and of all her religious orders of charity reminds one of the scene of the Pharisee's table, when an alabaster box of ointment was broken and its costly contents poured over the sacred head of Christ. Utquid perditio hæc?

If your philanthropy springs from the genuine love of God, how is it that in the cry of the dying there is no note of true contrition, sorrow that God has been offended? It is all "I have neglected mankind," "I die, and shall not be missed"; there

is no suggestion of "Tibi soli peccavi. . . Miserere mei, Deus. . . Amplius lava me."

A large proportion of mankind are born and live in circumstances in which they can barely keep soul and body together. If your Gospel to them is, "Love God," and in proportion to your love of Him, you will be kind to those around you, well and good. But if your Gospel is to all the world, "Agitate and combine for every social and political reform, and leave a name that will be blessed until it is forgotten. That is true love of God, and the only true Christianity," then you are not exactly a model Christian, but merely a modern Don Quixote.

"The idea," says Stead, "that everything wrong in the world was a divine call to use your life in righting it sank deeper into my soul. That is the Christianity that is wanted for our day—for every day, a Christianity that refashions the character of the individual, and makes him feel and see in every departure from the divine ideal in his fellow man or woman a concrete blasphemy against God and His Christ." The last sentence, I should be inclined to think, is a conscious imitation of Carlyle. At any rate, it is what I understand by the word cant or insincere rhetoric.

*The Vision of Sir Launfal* is a poem that Stead says should be read once a year in all the churches. Sir Launfal is a chivalrous knight who vows to search for the Holy Grail by land and sea. Before starting, he sleeps and dreams that he rides out on the holy quest. At the gate of his castle he is asked for an alms by a repulsive-looking leper. He flings an alms and shrinks from the sight with disgust. Then he rides away, and years after returns in old age and disappointment to find his

heir installed in his castle. The porter refuses him admittance, and when he meditates upon his humiliation, the same leper begs of him again. This time he shares his crust with the leper, and gives him water from the stream. Then he wakes a changed man. Thenceforward all his servants are equal lords of the castle with himself. It is a pretty version of a favourite and mediæval parable, only marred by the socialistic conclusion and scornful pointing of the moral at veneration for the relics and pious pilgrimage. Stead's commentary on this poem is, "This method of interpreting the sacraments and sublimating the outward and visible to the inner and invisible is scouted by many on the general principles that the Jews in the Gospel objected to the teaching of Jesus. Lowell's poems are full of spiritualization of old formulas." Of a poem called *Godminster Chimes*, in which occur these words,

And safe in God repose  
The saints of many a warring creed,  
Who now in heaven have learned  
That all paths to the Father lead,  
Where self the feet have spurned,

Stead says, "Is not this the essential principle of Christ's Gospel freed from the confused and often confusing tangle of many dogmatic theologies—the soul alike of the Westminster Confession, the Prayerbook and the Catholic Missal?"

This exactly expresses the sandbank ideal of Christianity, an exquisite distillation of the Gospel extracted from all the various denominations. To Catholics it seems to eliminate from their ideal all real spirituality, inner life and supernatural motive, to be simply human and utilitarian, and apart from the name and sentiment of Christianity



might just as well have been realized in perfection without the Incarnation of the Son of God. Individuals are too often worse, but they are sometimes better than their creed, and Lowell as a real poet could not be insensible to the beauty of the Catholic Church, her history and organization. Like many poets in moments of inspiration, he speaks far above his creed. He really is what his sandbank brother Stead glories in, though he sometimes blesses when he has been brought to curse.

Catholics know how the earnest preparation and thanksgiving for the sacraments penetrates into the innermost faculties of the soul and binds to God. They know how soon a soul that neglects the sacraments gives up prayer and hardens into practical unbelief. Yet they are accused by those who have never used the sacraments of mere formalism and neglect of the interior life. Honour be to Lowell and his earnest verses, so far as they oppose selfish greed of money and place and encourage philanthropy, for though not identical with Christian charity, it need not be antichristian, unless it be urged that all those who gather not with the Church scatter. The smoking flax should not be quenched, and the bruised reed should not be broken.

Frequently these apostolic verses, and invariably Stead's laudatory comments, imply, when they do not actually express, condemnation of the Church's ideal. Messrs Lowell and Stead are, I should suppose, far above the average of sandbank Christians. They have a certain kind of patronizing respect for and gratitude to the Catholic Church for her work in the past, though they have no doubt that they can improve upon her in the

present and for the future. She never has been, and still less is she now in these days of independence and enlightenment, their ideal Christianity. They want no morbid analysis of motives, no melancholy retrospects, no useless self-reproaches, no commandments but those of nature. They want canvassing and registration, organization, liberty, equality and fraternity in all things human and divine. Poverty, sickness and ignorance are not to be relieved but swept from the face of the earth for ever, by universal philanthropy. "How well I remember," says Stead, "night after night looking down from the Manors railway station, over the house-crowded valley at the base of All Saints' Church, Newcastle, which towered above them all, all black and empty, like the vast sepulchre of a dead God, and thinking, that behind every lighted window which gleamed through the smoky darkness, there was at least one human being whose heart was full of all the tragedies of love and hate, of life and of death, and yet between them and me, what a great gulf was fixed! How could bands of love and service be woven between these innumerable units, so as to make us all one brotherhood once more? There they sat by lamp and candle, so near, and yet in all the realities of their existence, so far apart as the fixed stars. And there grew up in me (largely under Lowell's influence) a feeling as if there was something that blasphemed God in whatever interposed a barrier impeding the free flow of the hopeful sympathy and confident intercourse between man and man. But how could anything be done?" It seems not to occur to Mr Stead that the Son of God, the wisdom of the Father, established His Church on earth for the express purpose of uniting men to-

gether in the bond of charity, and that not all the ingenuity of mere human organization has ever, or can ever do what the Catholic Church has in a great measure accomplished according to the degree in which men have submitted to her sweet yoke and light burden. Messrs Lowell and Stead know that Christ commissioned His Church to teach all nations; but, they say, her ministers have lamentably failed, and the great work must now be taken in hand by newspaper editors and journalists. They have the ear of the public, they speak the language of the people.

How is it that these highly educated, exceptionally able, and in a measure religious-minded persons revolt against the Catholic ideal of Christianity? It is because they cannot endure the idea of the Catholic priesthood. Sacraments and Mass stand or fall with the priesthood. That their own fellow men, many of them inferior in natural gifts and some even inferior in moral gifts as well, should claim to have been endowed with supernatural powers and a commission to teach them, submission to whom is necessary for salvation, is unbearable arrogance, and demands a depth of degradation unthinkable for English-speaking people. Moses was useful in the desert, and the Catholic priest may have been of use in the dark ages, but one is quite as much out of place as the other in these days of enlightened freedom. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that a form of Christianity must be produced unfettered by the trammels of priesthood, so hurtful, so crushing to the honest natural pride of man.

Thus does the Catholic Church inherit the opprobrium of her divine Founder. She gives the scandal of the Incarnation, the combination of the human

and divine. Lucifer would not bow to it. The Son of God was crucified for asserting it: what wonder that it is rejected with scorn by the free and easy-going sandbank Christian? It is hard for human pride to win that high beatitude, "Blessed is he that shall not be scandalized in Me."

## XVI—"The Limitations of Newman"

**T**HERE ought to be some good reason, to justify interference with anyone who has once been decently buried.

Certainly the article which it is proposed to bring under consideration to-day has been buried for some six months, and lies in a very honourable grave, the late *Monthly Register* of happy memory, nor is there any reasonable hope that the author will ever be canonized even if his name should be discovered. However, the real reason for exhuming so long after decease, and submitting it to the reflections of the Bede Society, is the great name with which it deals, a name held in grateful veneration by all English-speaking Catholics and in an especial degree by the members of this Society.

The writer suppresses his name, which may suggest modest diffidence. The author of *The Imitation* hides his name, but so also do less saintly authors. Or perhaps the writer does not wish his views to carry too much weight, lest they be thought beyond the sphere of criticism. However, it gives a slight charm of mystery to the article. The occasion of his writing is that he is under the impression that Newman's influence and literary reputation is in imminent danger of permanent depreciation, not so much from the attacks of enemies, as from the folly of friends, and therefore he comes to the rescue as the true friend in



need. But it seems more than doubtful from the tenor of the article whether his benevolent intention is so much to rescue Newman from his friends as to rescue the friends from Newman.

These friends are uncritical disciples, who idealize and would like to canonize, even idolize him. This would be, he tells us, to make Newman's life-work a failure. This, indeed, has been, he gives us to understand, the sad fate in past ages of the founders, leaders and teachers. Their life-work has eventually failed owing to the foolish adulation of their followers; to use his own words, "Humanity's best servants have become its worst tyrants." The remedy for this evil, in future, will be for an anonymous critic to define their limitations by intellectually cremating the worthy victims or, figuratively speaking, boil them down and skim off all that is not of permanent value to the human race. The residue, even of the greatest, would scarcely fill a snuff box and would be conveniently portable. "Alas, my poor brother!" might be inscribed on the lid. "Newman," we are told, "is now enough of a great man to be subject to the law of decay, by which such influence in the intellectual world is governed." Great enough to survive cremation, and there is no time to be lost if the awful crime of idolatry is to be averted. The tyrant must be overthrown. Not an unfrequent sequence this in melodrama. Royalty enthroned on the very crest of popularity; the masked courtier with tears of sympathy in his eyes, professing to love his royal master, but loving the liberty of the people more, with words of praise for the King and reproach for his enemies, plunges his dagger into the royal heart.

To begin with, he tells us, four-fifths of New-

man can be put aside as valueless (a large proportion of the first skimming), all, i.e., that he received passively from tradition and environment, and one-fifth (if it be so much even in the greatest, says this writer) will represent his active originality. Here we hold our breath with wonder. Who in the world is this great angel of judgement? It must be the great Time Spirit incarnate. Or is it possible? Can it be, after all, only the typical young man, who has little reverence for the past? he left that behind with school and college. He is going on in front: "Excelsior!" That being his bent, the one thing he abhors is a shut door, and, if possible, he will kick it open. Of course the Catholic Church is very troublesome to the young man, if he be of the household of Faith, and he will maintain that the door has not been closed by the Church, but by flunkeyism in the church porch. While a great writer is living, the young man must be civil to him and speak of him in whisper; but when the great man is dead, if his writings should chance to block any door, the young man kicks in the door boldly and maintains that the great man would have done likewise if he had been still living; such forsooth was his natural method, and his method is all that lives after him. "A voice replies far up the height: 'Excelsior!'"

Newman always sympathized with young men in Oxford days and in *Rambler* days, but he tried to temper the wrath of their high spirits; his own spirit was reverent subordination to authority both as Anglican and Catholic. He knew the young-man spirit well, and when first he saw what Kingsley had written about him, not knowing who he was, he thought, "This is some young scribe who is trying to carve a cheap reputation

by making smart hits at safe objects." But, whoever our author may be, his method, and let us hope it will not long survive, is to cremate his friends, study assiduously their limitations. This is the sacred duty and measure of all true friendship.

He expresses some misgiving as to the propriety of the title of his essay. These foolish friends will think it "male sonans." But why should they? It is not the title, but the treatment under the title that is questionable. The outline of a mountain is its limitation, and very beautiful when traced by a sympathetic hand, though no one would be always content with outlines only. Any friend of Newman would have been interested to hear the late Richard Hutton, of *The Spectator*, treat of the limitations of Newman, because he is known to have had an intense appreciation of Newman and his works, and therefore could be trusted to point out where Newman had failed to realize his ideal. No one has given Newman higher praise than that he received from the pen of Hutton, but that praise was never indiscriminate. Hutton thoroughly possessed himself of Newman's ideal, and by that he judged him, although he could not as a Protestant adopt that ideal for himself.

Mr Richard Hutton at the conclusion of his Memoir says: "*The Dream of Gerontius* seems to me to contain the happiest summary we could have of the ideal which had pervaded and constituted the significance of the remarkable life I have been trying to review, a life that has fed itself from beginning to end on the substance of divine revelation, and that has measured the whole length and breadth and depth of human doubt, without fascination and without dread, a life at

once both severe and tender, both passionate and self-controlled, with more in it perhaps of ascetic love of suffering than of actual suffering, more of mortification than of unhappiness, more of sensibility and sensitiveness than of actual anguish, but still a lonely and severe and saintly life. No life known to me in the last century of our national history can for a moment compare with it, so far as we can judge of such deep matters, in unity of meaning and constancy of purpose. It has been carved, as it were, out of one solid block of spiritual substance, and though there may be weak and wavering lines here and there in the carving, it is not easy to detect any flaw in the material on which the long indefatigable labour has been spent."

But this nameless scribe not only has never mastered the Newman ideal, but writes under the influence of very serious irritation. He gives the impression that he must have been pelted by some one with Newman, until he is beside himself with disgust. His first sentence implies that the very name of Newman is becoming to him a bore. It concludes thus: "Forgetful of the limits of the public's swallowing capacity, they [i.e. the foolish friends of Newman] would have it gulp down the wine of their inspiration by bucketfuls, with the result that it is rejected altogether, and that the hero becomes a bore."

The last words of his article are: "The Catholic Church is greater than any of her exponents, even than Newman." So he introduces himself as Newman's champion against his friends, and bows himself out as the champion of the Catholic Church against Newman. He may have had the misfortune to hear gushing, indiscriminate praise of

Newman, which even when most sincere, excites a carping, minimizing criticism. Speak ill of your friends and praise your enemies, is the cynic's advice, and your friends will find favour and your enemies be disliked. We must have commiseration for anyone who is sea-sick, but we deprecate his going, under the circumstances, to the windward of the vessel. "He is no true friend of Newman," we are told, "who does not care far more for his spirit, temper and method, than for the matter with which he deals, or for the results which he reached. The particular ecclesiastical problems with which he deals have, in these few years, been swallowed up in others vaster and more fundamental, touching the most universal interests of Christianity and religion. Many of his quiet assumptions have become pressing difficulties to us. We no longer ask how the Catholicism of to-day grew out of the Church of the Fathers or out of the Bible, but how these grew out of beginnings immeasurably more difficult to trace and define."

Such general remarks would be more interesting if the writer could have given them point by definite illustration. If, for example, he could make clear confession that he had been robbed of sleep at night by the hurricane of higher criticism exploding book after book of those quiet and most venerable assumptions, the Old and New Testaments; and that when the fever was at its height, some calm and mild-faced friend had administered a dose of Newman, resulting in a quick succession of cataleptic fits. But, seriously, why should he complain that the deceased Cardinal does not help him out of his new difficulties? If this is all that he means by limitations, surely he



need not fear contradiction from the most foolish friend of Newman. Even if he were still alive and in full vigour, I doubt whether Newman would be able to satisfy this troubled spirit, walking throughout places without water seeking rest. We can imagine Newman saying, in effect, "I am not going, at the risk of my neck, to stand on every or any new-fangled platform that unbelievers choose to construct. I commiserate anyone who has so far yielded to the climbing instincts of youth as to get up on any such platform, and I will give my best advice how to climb down again and come back to where I am standing." Newman so often insisted on the necessity for a common ground, if argument is to be conclusive, and there are many who decline absolutely to take any position (in treating of divine revelation) which a good Catholic would accept. In the absence of anything more definite it would appear that this writer identifies Newman's life-work with the *Essay on Development* and *Lectures on Anglican Difficulties*. It is difficult to imagine a state of religious life in which these works would have lost all their interest and for many their vital importance. However, they do not represent the life-work of Newman's mind. The *Grammar of Assent* is the philosophy of his writings, in which he systematized what had been maturing through all his writings, however various. The *Grammar* can be illustrated from his *Parochial Sermons*, from his *Historical Essays* and even from *Callista*, and, of course, still more from such works as *University Lectures* and *Sermons*.

To return to the limitations of Newman, it matters little whether or not you care more for Newman's spirit, temper and method, than for

his matter and results. They are distinguishable but inseparable. The spirit, temper and method are the moulds of the matter and results. This welding of matter and form is the specific character of literary work in contradistinction to mathematical or mechanical work. The latter can be measured, weighed, and the results be separated from the method. Not so in literary work such as Newman's. "We do not want," says our author, "Newman in marble, but Newman in life." By all means give us Newman in life, but this author's treatment will only give us Newman in dissolution. How painful it would be to hear that the body of a dear and revered friend had been exhumed and, in the interests of science, had been cut up and dried, and is now to be seen ticketed and placed amongst the specimens of vertebrate or other class, according to the view taken by the custodian of the museum! I can find him by looking at the catalogue, but, even then, I cannot recognize him. To begin with, they have cut him up into little bits. And where is his heart? He is nothing without that. Yes, that is a portion of his skull, that was too noble to be thrown away, but they have cracked and chipped it, and without the heart they have not got the man I knew after all. Newman's body has so far escaped the museum, but his intellectual work has fallen into the hands of a showman, who, in the interests of what he is pleased to call "active originality," makes his very limited selection of one-fifth, and tickets it accordingly, and so, to use his own words, "subjects him to the law of decay, by which such influence in the intellectual world is governed."

Our student of limitations strongly objects to idealizing. The Religious Orders idealize their

Founders and so stultify their life-work. He should found an Order himself. It might be called a limitation or limited liability Order, or a pessimistic or minimizing Order. All his disciples should make their morning meditation on the limitations of their Founder.

St Paul did not tell his disciples to study his limitations. He did that thoroughly for himself. "I am the least of the Apostles," "I am not worthy to be called an Apostle." But to his disciples, "Walk as you have my model." He knew the divine Ideal in whose footsteps he was trying to walk, and he bade them follow. What a mercy that the world, secular and religious, has never treated its heroes as this writer would have us treat all great men! The most elevating and educating mental activity is idealizing, which leads to more and more perfecting the actual. You may be a very sorry specimen if only your ideal is good, but no ability will redeem you if your ideal is Dick Turpin, or Luther, or Lucifer, or other higher critic.

Every one has, consciously or unconsciously, an ideal. It may be high or low, vicious or virtuous, worldly or religious, philanthropic, political or legal or military, according to each one's avocation and circumstances. We can compare one ideal with another, and may point out how a person has either fallen short of their ideal or has realized it. In this we shall be studying their limitations. But if we have never grasped a person's ideal, we shall be groping in the dark and uttering incoherent words. We shall in all probability judge one person by the ideal of another. Newman's ideal was not that of natural science, or mathematics, or antiquarian or Biblical research, or politics; and

to judge him by these ideals would be to misunderstand him, not to study his limitations.

The writer we are considering has never grasped Newman's ideal. He is disturbed by the devastations of higher critics in Biblical research and is disappointed that Newman has no help for him. He might almost expect Newman to relieve his anxiety if occasioned by the proximate destruction of the earth by collision with a comet. One-fifth of Newman's work bears the writer's hallmark of originality. But the young man in the foremost ranks of time, flourishing his Excelsior banner, would despise a great deal that average minds would value. Who is to be the judge of what is original? Newman, speaking of the highly gifted mind of Hurrell Froude, says of him that his ideas were original in him, i.e., were all carefully thought out and passed through the mill of his own mind. And surely, it would be more true to say that four-fifths rather than one-fifth of Newman's writings were thus original in him. Strikingly original as is the *Grammar of Assent*, it probably had its earliest germ in Butler's *Analogy*. But for absolute originality in matter and form, where is it found? And to thirst for originality and make it the one standard of value in literature "is emphatically young." Amongst Newman's prayers we read, "In all things I need to be saved from an originality of thought which is not true, if it leads away from Thee."

Of St Thomas Aquinas this writer says: "It is not what Aquinas said in his own times that matters, but what he would say in these times. It is not by the *Summa Theologica* that we are to measure St Thomas, but by the broad synthetic progressive spirit of which it is the fruit." That,

doubtless, was the reason why the Fathers at Trent, as is said, laid the *Summa* on the table with the Bible. The contents were little to them, it was the broad synthetic spirit they valued. Does this method savour of higher criticism? It matters not who wrote the Old and New Testaments, nor indeed what particular facts they profess to record. The net result is all we want, of the Old Testament Anathema to Idolatry, and of the New "Our Father who art in Heaven." What more do we want? This is the sweet disinfecting result of cremation, all sweetness and light, so undogmatic!

If I have not done justice to this writer, it is because he has not done justice to himself. He has written in a bad temper, and expressed himself in generalities. If there is truth in his views, they could and ought to have been illustrated by extracts from Newman's writings. To write in irritation on such a subject, without illustrations and above all anonymously, can only be offensive to those who really care for Newman and his work, and is, in effect, little more than a grumble. If the writer had first shown his sympathy with Newman's work and his appreciation of his ideal, and under his own signature, he might then, with the utmost modesty and diffidence, have suggested what to him appeared to be issues untouched by Newman's conclusions. This would have been interesting and perhaps even valuable. That we may give this writer his due, he does admit that Newman was a great man, and that one-fifth of his work will live if only his friends will sufficiently study his limitations. He has succeeded in what he intended to do, he has damned Newman with faint praise. And he has unwittingly exemplified



in his own person the truth of his opening text, that "a man's worst enemies are those of his own household," for it would be difficult to find anyone outside the household of faith, who would write such a depreciatory article on Newman.

## XVII—Notes by a Guardian of the Poor

**O**NLY those who are destitute permanently or temporally are provided for out of the rates under the Poor Law.

The destitute are those who have not the means for obtaining even the bare necessities of life.

A Poor Law Guardian is one of a number elected by the ratepayers to administer the Poor Law. He is not a Guardian of the Poor Law or of the ratepayer or of the rates, though he should not lose sight of these, but he is a guardian of the poor, and therefore is in duty bound to provide for the necessities of the destitute, as liberally as the law will permit. So far as my experience goes, this has always been the aim of every Guardian of whatever temper, temperament or qualification he may have been, and these were very various. The old-fashioned harshness or indifference which is associated with Bumbledom seemed no longer to exist.

I suppose there always will be some discontent amongst the recipients of relief, but their grievance when valid is not against the administration so much as against the limitations of the law. The relieving officers are the persons who come into immediate contact with the Poor. They have to visit and investigate the home and circumstances of every applicant. They have to use their discretion in granting doctor's notes or provisions,

which has to be confirmed at the next Relief Committee meeting. They have to distribute the relief in money and bread authorized by the committee. These officers are sometimes severely tried by the rude and brutal language of some ruffians of both sexes occasionally to be found among the lowest, as amongst the higher classes, and I have wondered at the splendid self-control and calm judicial treatment of such cases by these officers. A Guardian should have plenty of leisure, or at least have the disposal of his time, so that he may be a regular attendant at the fortnightly general meetings and at the meeting of those committees of which he is appointed a member. If he has property in the neighbourhood and understands the various conditions that go to increase or diminish the value of property, he may be a useful member of the Assessment Committee. This committee, though elected by the Guardians from amongst themselves, is responsible, not to the Guardians, but immediately to the Local Government Board, and is called a Statutory Committee.

If a Guardian is or has been in any business, trade or profession, his experience may be turned to good account on the House or Infirmary Committee. If he knows personally many of the poor and takes an interest in them, he will find the work of the out-relief committee congenial. But if he has the misfortune to be possessed by the evil spirit, familiarly called a Fad, he is, so far, positively disqualified, unless he can leave it at home under lock and key. But if it is on the brain, and he cannot help airing it whenever he gets upon his legs to speak on any subject whatever, in that case, whatever may be his abilities in other respects, he had far better resign his seat

on the Board, for he will, otherwise, inevitably be a constant nuisance and irritation to the members and an impediment to all useful business. His Fad may be, as of course he himself believes it to be, an inspiration of genius, such as has sometimes been known to forestall the future discoveries of science. But, even on that extreme supposition, he will only do harm to a good cause by dragging the subject in where it is entirely out of place. He should confine it to speeches at public meetings convened for that purpose, paragraphs in papers and articles in Reviews.

One victim subject to this mental affliction during my time was an Anti-Vaccinationist, well educated, well read, urbanity itself, even in his most excited moments, which were many, and a good speaker.

The common sense of the Board repeatedly protested against the indignity of being subjected, against its will, to a learned lecture against Vaccination.

There is, of course, a Vaccination Committee, not to discuss the merits or demerits of Vaccination, but simply to see that the law is carried out and that the Vaccination Officer and doctors do their duty in this respect, and to check their returns. But the merits of Vaccination was a question which never could really come before the Board. This Anti-Vaccinationist gentleman, however, adroitly succeeded in tacking it on to almost any subject under discussion. Time after time, for years, did he challenge the Board to controvert his views, and although at one time two doctors were members, no one would take up his gauntlet. It was felt to be a question quite out of order. They had no more idea of fighting him

on that issue than the windmills had of fighting Don Quixote. Without being well read in the subject it was obvious that the vast majority of doctors throughout the civilized world had for more than a century regarded Vaccination as the best known prophylactic against small-pox, and, what was still more to the point, the Government whose laws and directions the Guardians were appointed to carry out, was also of the same opinion. No wonder the Board declined to follow the lead of an agitator.

The fanatical spirit is the very opposite to the judicial spirit. The judicial spirit calmly and impartially weighs evidence on both sides of a question. The fanatical spirit wildly clutches at everything that comes within reach and wrests it to its purpose. Most of the ills of life seemed to be ascribed, by this particular fanatic, to Vaccination.

I ventured to submit that the verdict of science was, so far, heavily on the side of Vaccination, and that it would ill become the Guardians of the Poor to encourage them to disobey their doctors. He declared that it was not a scientific question, because small-pox had never been scientifically defined, forgetting that few things have been more than practically defined, sufficiently, that is, for use and treatment in daily life. What scientific definition is there of such ordinary things as life, light, heat, electricity? Yet they are admittedly scientific subjects.

Inoculation is successfully practised in many other diseases besides small-pox. It is the application of a natural principle always at work for good and for evil. Acclimatization is an instance in point. There is nothing *prima facie* prepos-



rous in Vaccination, although it may in time be superseded by better remedies.

But, when a man ascribes the most remote evils, such as lunacy and immorality, to vaccination, only proposing general sanitation as the alternative, and addresses wild rhetoric to general public meetings and Boards of Guardians against a supposed conspiracy amongst the doctors, his method does not prepossess one in favour of his view. Let him address the Faculty, convert the doctors, and then Government will legislate and the Guardians act accordingly. One simple-minded gentleman, who always seconded the Anti-Vaccinationist on every subject and sat next to him, loudly declared that no trust could be placed in doctors because they constantly differed in their treatment of particular cases, quite oblivious of the distinction between differing in principle and differing in the application of those principles. I suppose anyone has a right, if he will, so completely to identify himself with one side of an admittedly open question, that it becomes impossible to argue on the opposite side without appearing to be personal. He may wish to become a martyr in the cause, at any rate he must be prepared to take the consequences without resentment.

Another Fad may be called the economic Fad. E.g., a new Infirmary had to be built. The Guardians were on new ground, in more senses than one, and therefore proceeded with extreme caution. The first contract was only half what it eventually became. The first design had to be supplemented and some particulars altered, which involved extra expense. However, it was never shown that the building when finished had cost more than it

would have done if it had been originally planned in its entirety. The Government Inspector and the specialist Arbitrator recommended by the Local Government Board both approved of the building and gave it as their opinion that we had the worth of our money. Nevertheless the economic Faddist is never weary of referring to this Infirmary as a most grievous and lamentable instance of maladministration of public money. He even went so far as to print a pamphlet on the subject, giving the names of all who were members of the Board at the time of the actual building of the Infirmary. He himself had been a member when the plan was first set on foot and when, if there was any fault in the transaction, it was committed. He then retired and was returned again after an interval of three years. This public impeachment of his colleagues was an outrageous violation of all propriety and traditional etiquette. It was not treated as a libellous defamation but mercifully suffered as a painful eccentricity.

Another Fad is the statistical Fad. This is a torment to officials. It consists in a feverish desire to have everything reduced to figures and tabulated. These returns are called for ostensibly out of a sense of justice to the ratepayer. The ratepayer will probably just have time to run his eye down the columns of figures at breakfast or on his way to business, and startled at the magnitude of certain totals of expenditure, scribbles a letter in a tone of righteous indignation to the local daily. Of course, all this information has already come before the Board in the regular reports of committees, when the press representatives are present, but that does not satisfy the statistical Faddist's morbid appetite for tables and figures.

Something may be done by an exceptionally prompt and firm chairman to restrain the Faddist. The first chairman I knew, who held the post for sixteen years or more until his death, was an auctioneer by profession, a wealthy man, who had been Mayor of Birmingham and was a Justice of the Peace, was as a Guardian a good man all round. On any committee he was first-rate. He did his best to extinguish Fad-speeches. He was invaluable on the Assessment Committee, for as an auctioneer he knew all the property around. He might almost be said to love the Workhouse, and generally had his Christmas dinner with the officials at the Workhouse. The most judicial level-headed member of the Board, his death was a sad loss for the Union, the Workhouse and the Guardians.

One duty of the Guardians is to visit and report upon those inmates of lunatic asylums whose maintenance is paid for out of the Rates. These institutions when built for the purpose are handsome, commodious buildings, as cheerful as may be. But there was one I had to visit which was in temporary use: it had been a residence of the Earl of Dartmouth. The approach was by lodge gates and an avenue drive through the park. But everything bespoke desolation and the wreck of former affluence. It reminded me of Hood's *Haunted House*. "Unhinged the gate half open hung, jarred by the gales of many winters, that from its crumbling pedestal had flung one marble globe in splinters."

It had been the happy home of generations of a noble house. The hall doors and drawing-room windows opened to the ground under a verandah. The rooms retained the gilding and parts of the

rich paper of prosperous days. "A residence for woman, child and man; a dwelling place, and yet no habitation; a house, but under some prodigious ban of excommunication." The fine suite of dining and drawing-rooms filled with lunatics—what a contrast to the scenes of its past splendour, the lords and ladies and fashionable company amid the sounds of music and children's voices, met together for Christmas merriment, hunt balls and garden parties, replaced now by madmen of every description, lolling about or moodily skulking, some smoking, all insane! Worse than any haunted house! Ghosts would be sociable comrades compared with these leering idiots. Yet, in one sense, what place could be more appropriate for such afflicted creatures! Each one of them a desolate, deserted, blighted mansion, where reason once kept state and joyful company, but now inhabited by madness and falling into decay.

Every one knows that there is a general wish throughout the country to make the destitute as comfortable as circumstances will permit, and for this purpose the giving out-relief has been encouraged, so that, if possible, a home may never be broken up.

In cases where a husband has absconded or got himself put into prison there would be a danger of encouraging desertion and petty crime by giving out-relief. Single old decrepid persons, living in one-room lodgings, are not given out-relief unless they have some neighbour close at hand who will engage to assist them in case of sudden illness, because the Guardians would then be taking the responsibility in case anything were to befall them. The classification of the inmates

of the Workhouse is being gradually improved. The Infirmary is equal in all its appointments to the best Hospitals. The professional tramp, who is in touch with the criminal class, is distinguished from the bona fide workman, who receives more generous treatment. Children are not kept permanently in the Workhouse, but are sent to schools or Cottage Homes. Poor Law Conferences are held annually—Central Conferences in London and Provincial Conferences up and down the country—at which many thoughtful, well-written papers are read, then printed and circulated. These spread a truer knowledge of what is being done for the poor already, and stimulate hope that more and more will be done. But at the same time they make us realize that there are miseries inseparable from the lowest stratum of society, which can only be more or less alleviated, but never wholly eradicated; that human society must necessarily precipitate those who have lost the means of floating, although amongst them are many of the most deserving, while many of the least deserving will float as scum upon the surface. The rates cannot be administered with the freedom of charitable funds. The sphere of charity is outside and beyond the administration of the Poor Law. Charity Organization Societies do work, in some instances, in touch and in harmony with Boards of Guardians. In this connexion, it is interesting to compare the Little Sisters' Home for the Aged Poor with the Workhouse. They deal with a selection of the same class.

The State recognizes it as a duty, in its capacity of Guardian of all classes of society, to protect the incapable from starvation. It is an administration of justice. As justice removes the



criminal into a penal institution with as little aggravation of suffering as may be, so in like manner it removes the mendicant to a Board and Lodging Institution with as much comfort as the pockets of the ratepayers will tolerate.

The Little Sisters' Home is entirely a charitable institution for a selection of aged poor over the age of sixty, and those are excluded whose habits of intemperance or immorality of any kind would impede the efforts to relieve the respectable inmates. The comparative economy of the Little Sisters' Home is great, because they have no salaried officers, and their income and food are procured by begging from door to door. The result obtained is, for the 220 inmates at St Joseph's Home, far greater peace and happiness than is the lot of the average Workhouse inmates. It may be as well here to put on record an interesting episode illustrative of Protestant Anti-Catholic prejudice. It is customary for the Guardians to vote a subscription of £5, more or less, out of the rates to various charitable institutions within the Union, such as hospitals, Middlemore Homes, District Nursing Associations, etc., subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, on the ground that these Institutions are a saving to the rates by their services to the poor of the Union.

About eight years ago I proposed that a donation of £5 should be given to the Little Sisters' Home. The Guardians passed it, but the Local Government Board refused their sanction, as follows:

"Local Government Board,

"Whitehall, S.W.

"August 26, 1896.

"Sir,

"I am directed by the Local Government Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ultimo with its enclosure relative to the proposal of the Guardians of the ——— Union to subscribe to the funds of the Home for the aged poor provided by the Little Sisters of the Poor at ———.

"I am directed to state that it does not appear to the Board that it is shown that the Paupers under the Guardians have or could have assistance in these Homes in case of necessity, and that the circumstances are not such that the Board consider that they should assent to the proposed payment.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

———,  
"Assistant Secretary."

It would seem from this that the evil spirit of religious bigotry cast out of the Board of Guardians had taken refuge, not in a herd of swine, but in the more commodious quarters of the Local Government Board. It is a reversal of the ordinary rule, that the higher you go in the social scale the less you find of religious bigotry.

The Catholic religion is the only power that can give justice and peace. When the giver and receiver are both imbued with the true Faith, then both are blest, he that giveth and he that receiveth. The ideal is beyond the reach of Protestant England. The State regards poverty as, for the most part, the result of unthrifty, intempe-

rate, vicious habits, whereas the Catholic Church cannot forget that involuntary as well as voluntary poverty is a state which has been specially blessed by the teaching and example of her divine Founder; in a word, that it is a holy state, although there will always be many unworthy individuals voluntarily and involuntarily poor.

The poet Hood wins our sympathy for the bona fide workman reduced in hard times to ask for parish relief and offered the Workhouse.

No job I'll shirk of the hardest work, to shun the Workhouse walls,

Where savage laws begrudge the pauper babe its breath,  
And dooms a wife to a widow's life before her partner's death.  
No parish money or loaf, no pauper badges for me,  
A son of the soil, by right of toil, entitled to my fee;  
No alms I ask, give me my task; here are the arm, the leg,  
The strength, the sinews of a man, to work and not to beg.

Fortunately the working-man of to-day has, as a rule, made good provision for himself by means of Trades Unions, Clubs and Benefit Societies. And those who come to the Workhouse do not meet the savagery which was a reality in Hood's day.

Charles Lamb champions the licensed beggar, in his essay *A Complaint of the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis*. He writes: "The all-sweeping besoms of societarian reformation, your only modern Alcides' Club to rid the time of its abuses, is uplift with many-handed sway to extirpate the last fluttering tatters of the bugbear mendicity from the Metropolis. Srips, wallets, bags, staves, dogs and crutches, the whole mendicant fraternity with all their baggage, are fast posting out of the pur-  
lieus from this eleventh persecution. From the crowded crossing, from the corners of the streets and turnings of the alleys, the parting genius of beggary is 'with sighing sent.' I do not approve,"

he continues, "of this wholesale going to work, this impertinent crusado, or bellum ad exterminationem, proclaimed against a species. Much good might be sucked from these beggars. They are the oldest and the honourablest form of pauperism."

Certainly, I must confess that the beggars of Rome form a not unpleasing feature in my own cherished recollections of forty years ago. There was an old man shorn of both his legs who laid up quite a little fortune with which he dowered his daughter. He made this when stationed at the steps of Trinità di Monte. When I knew him, he had been degraded to a corner near the church of Sant' Agostino. His mode of progression was on the back of a donkey, which he galloped splendidly. Then there was the small crippled woman always brought on some one's back to San Girolamo della Carità just opposite the English College, in winter with her scaldino in her hand.

She was taken into the church and heard two or three Masses, and then was put back on the outside of the church door, there to remain until evening, when her human beast of burden returned and took her home. Then there was the blind man led by his little son with large plaintive eyes and mournful cry "povero cecco," who waylaid us every morning at the door of the Collegio Romano, and there was the lame man with crutches on Ponte Sisto, who thanked us as poveri Capuccini, if he got next to nothing, and as Cardinali and Monsignori if he got something worth having. Italy was a land where involuntary as well as voluntary poverty could be and was held to be a holy state and where St Benedict Joseph Labre was a practical ideal. If all the monasteries and convents destroyed at the Re-

formation in England could be restored and all the nation returned to the one Catholic Faith, the poor in this country also might be held in honour. Who can deny that Lazarus was Dives's opportunity of saving his soul, which he neglected, as Father Bridgett well says in his sonnet?

Near to the rich man's door from day to day  
Poor Lazarus in his rags and ulcers lay,  
There placed by God, to stir that bloated soul  
To faith and charity and self-control.  
In vain; neglected and despised he lay  
The rich man's nuisance in the public way.

Death changes all. The rich man beggar turned  
In vain asks pity from the saint he spurned  
In vain; for now far off their lots are cast,  
A gulf divides them never to be passed.  
The grace is lost, the prayer is made too late,  
Which, made in time, had changed the wretch's fate.

But in mercenary, money-making, Protestant England, where sanitation is the sublimest aspiration and the microbe and bacillus have taken the place of mortal and venial sin, the Poor Law is perhaps the best provision that can be devised for the poor themselves, although it does deprive the rich man of that wholesome daily contact with the poor man, a blessing which, however much he stands in need of it, he would despise and loathe. Philanthropy has in it little of the supernatural. It springs from a composite motive, of which self-preservation is a magna pars. In the first instance, the driving the beggar into the Workhouse, which Lamb so strongly resented, was almost entirely a selfish movement. In these days it looks as if the balm of Christian charity is working more and more through the whole system of the Poor Law.

The subject is an intricate and many-sided one.

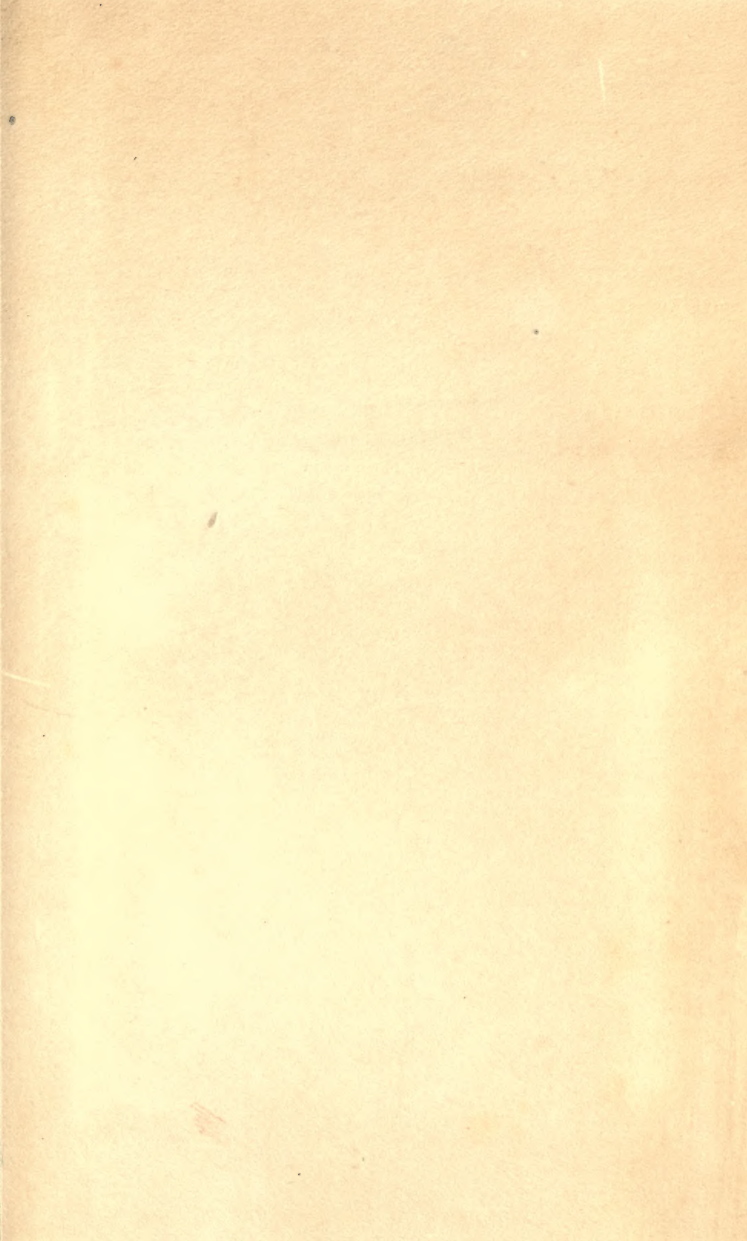


Who could adequately describe all the works and institutions of charity in Protestant England and the vast sums of money expended on the poor and on the sick, on hospitals and on sanatoriums? It defies estimation. We cannot doubt but that the hand of God is in it, and that the Father of the poor will bless the country for it with higher gifts and graces, although we can plainly see that it has in it a utilitarian and self-complacent element which differentiates it from the highest forms of Christian charity.

That my last note may be in a cheerful key, I will conclude by bearing testimony to the invariable courtesy always shown by the members of the Board and by the officers to His Reverence the Roman Catholic priest. The Board was composed of very heterogeneous elements. Out of the twenty-eight members occur to my memory a Church of England parson, a retired officer of the army, two doctors, two millers, a tailor, a draper, a parish clerk, a foreman bricklayer, a chemist, an election agent, an auctioneer, one married and two maiden ladies, a publican and a priest. The Board worked, on the whole, with great harmony, which may be attributed to their avoiding political and religious questions, and to their single-minded desire to administer the rates to the best advantage of the poor. A summer day's outing was organized every year by the clerk, which tended to increase fellow-feeling. Two of these annual trips which I joined were on rivers. One on the Thames from Oxford to Abingdon and back, saloon carriage to Oxford, and steam launch to Abingdon, where we dined. Another trip was on the Avon, from Evesham to Pershore, where we saw the church and dined; we then continued

on the river to Tewkesbury, visited the Abbey church, then had tea and trained back to Birmingham.

'Tis pleasant and 'tis useful stooping down  
Closely to scan the wondrous stream of time,  
To stay each little wave and feel it throb  
A moment in the hand, then sink away.  
Nor vain to watch our own reflection change  
As the stream flows, now rough, now smooth again,  
Slowly beneath the shade of toil and grief,  
Then dancing in the sunshine of true joy.







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